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Lifestyle, design process and the creative practice of do-it-yourself (DIY) as a transformative experience

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Declaration

This is to certify that:

(i) to the best of my knowledge and belief this thesis contains no material previously published by any other person except where due acknowledgment has been made. This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university,

(ii) the thesis comprises only my original work towards the PhD except where indicated,

(iii) due acknowledgement has been made in the text to all other material used,

(iv) the thesis is less than 100,000 words in length, exclusive of tables, maps, figures, bibliographies/references, appendices and footnotes.

Nicola Dawn Smith

Date

City Landscape denim collage (detail)
Choy So Young, HK International Art Fair, May 2011

We shape our buildings; thereafter they shape us.
(Sir Winston Churchill)

We renovate[1] our homes; *hoping* they renovate[2] the way we live.
(Nicola D Smith)

[1] To improve by renewing or restoring, remodel.
[2] To impart new vigor to, revive.

Abstract

This thesis seeks to understand the connection between design, do-it-yourself (DIY) and lifestyle, taking into account the influence of the media and the separate interests of project stakeholders—designers, builders and homeowners. The research explores the concept of lifestyle as a way of living influenced by design process and DIY activity, and further how lifestyle is created or altered by individuals through direct engagement with changing the fabric and/or aesthetics of the home.

The home improvement market continues to expand, yet building industry designers rarely work with clients on DIY projects. This reluctance reinforces a division between professional and amateur home improvement practices, contributes to the narrowing field of domestic architectural commissions, and misses an opportunity for designers to take a more significant role in the transformation of client lifestyles. Although DIY is promoted as a way of creating the dream homes conveyed in magazines and lifestyle television programmes, as a self-navigated design-build practice directed at realising dreams of a better life, it remains unexplored. Additionally, lifestyle as a concept at the centre of the study remains a nebulous term of little use to designers. This thesis addresses these gaps and limitations, arguing that by taking a bricolage approach, professionals with design skills can influence a much broader group of stakeholders, and engage with the process of home making to a greater extent than is normally possible. Further the thesis proposes a way to map lifestyle as a dreamscape, identifying and promoting greater connectivity between people, places and practices.

Qualitative research methods, including practitioner observation, survey, interview and case study, are used to investigate past and present DIY projects in the homes of designers and non-designers, and the relationship between imagined and actual lifestyles. Data is examined for differences in the way designers and non-designers

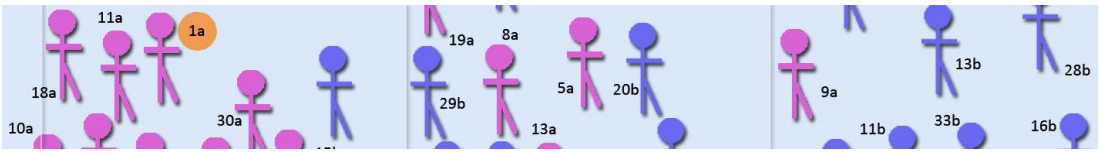
conceptualise, plan and realise DIY projects, and compared with the process taken by design professions on contract projects.

This study reveals an entanglement of creative and collaborative practices influenced by personal and social values and everyday skills such as resourcefulness, improvisation and adaptation. Practitioners were seen to engage with DIY as a way of connecting with others, including designers, and with their own aspirations and capabilities, and to experience personal transformation. The concept of lifestyle was found to be much more than a marketable set of aspirations and ideals and a new definition is presented; lifestyle is articulated as a kaleidoscope of realised and imagined transformations, a complex collage of activities, values, visions, roles and skills. Notions of self-actualization and self-place became a crucial part of the ongoing cycle of change and renewal that is seen to epitomise contemporary day-to-day lifestyles.

This thesis presents original interpretations of participant home renovation experiences, and provides valuable insights on: (i) DIY as a transformative activity, (ii) the process of design in home improvement projects, and (iii) perceptions of ideal and real lifestyles. Through facilitating co-design projects and generating more participatory and innovative practices together with non-designers, this study, as one of the first in the field, proposes ways in which design professionals working with others as hybrid practitioners have the opportunity to play a key role in translating value into transformative experiences.

Acknowledgements

This thesis has emerged as a work of deep collaboration with *my kind*, *our kind* and *other kinds*, with academics and professionals, with both DIY enthusiasts *and* phobics, and with the words, images, voices, and gestures of people from the centre to the distant margins of this research. True to the findings, even projects that seem to be *do-it-yourself* are nearly always *done-with-others.*



I am indebted to these essential *others*, who have unfailingly been—bricolage style—*on hand* to provide guidance, support or critique throughout the course of this study, and with many for much longer. My greatest debt is to the colourful participants, who generously welcomed me into their homes and lives, shared memories and knowledge, anxieties and dreams, time and … tools.

My deepest gratitude goes to my supervisory team, allowing me great freedom to *tinker* with concepts, ideas, methods, visual documentation and written outputs, and knowing when to step in, hard hats firmly in place. In particular, I thank Associate Professor Dianne Smith and Associate Professor Reena Tiwari for their wisdom, enthusiasm, keen insight, patience and perseverance.

I would like to acknowledge Curtin University for invaluable financial and organizational support, and thank the wonderful administrative and academic staff, and students, who have contributed to my doctoral experience, and the research in a multitude of tangible and intangible ways.

There are so many others who have greatly inspired me, both here and overseas, I would like to thank each of them for their generosity, and I will—individually.

Dedication

Dedicated to my feline family, who, in walking, lying and rolling across the keyboard on a daily basis, have most definitely contributed to the construction—and occasional deconstruction—of this thesis.

Above: Twiglet checking on project progress

> The cat … lives with man on terms of equality, knows nothing of that relation with status which is the ancient basis of all distinctions of worth, honour, and repute and she does not lend herself with facility to an invidious comparison between her owner and his neighbours. (Veblen, 1925, p. 140)

“ the concept of **lifestyle**:
lifestyle as a design influenced 'way of living'
the phenomenon of **DIY**:
DIY as a creative practice centred on
home + self improvement and
the transformation of

lifestyle ”

Above: Extract from research conference poster, 2010

Contents

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List of abbreviations

AECP	Australian Everyday Consumption Project
CCP	Cultures of Consumption Project
DIY	Do-it-yourself
DIW	Do-it-with (others)
EC+LS	Everyday Cultures and Lifestyle Survey
GD	Grand Designs
HCD	Human-centred design
LOHAS	Lifestyles of Health and Sustainability
LOVOS	Lifestyles of Voluntary Simplicity (sub-group of LOHAS)
NATSEM	National Centre for Social and Economic Modeling
PAHR	Pluralistic Analysis of Housing Renovation Choices in Brisbane
PARKOS	Participatory Consumption lifestyles (sub-group of LOHAS)
POET	Point of Entry Text
R&M	Repair(s) and Maintenance

Introduction

Architects and other building industry design professionals find they are no longer able to compete effectively for home improvement work given alternative options available to the homeowner, primarily that of do-it-yourself (DIY) home construction. Although interest in upgrading the home on a DIY basis has led to an increase in the range of tools and renovation hardware available, contributing to the workload of *product* designers, architects are experiencing increased difficulty locating clients in the home improvement sector (Nicholls, 2013; C. D. Smith, 2012;). Furthermore, building industry designers rarely work with DIY home improvement, generally determined to be time inefficient with restrictively low budgets (McNeill, 2009). Architects' exclusion of DIY contributes to the narrowing field of prospective clients who can afford a full-service build, and reinforces a division between professional and amateur home modification projects. This divide calls in to question the quality of workmanship and authenticity of the skills, techniques and outcome. The distinction between the two blurs with 'pro-am' fields such as DIY home renovation, where amateurs acquire skills without professional training, aiming to produce work of professional standards (Leadbeater & Miller, 2004).

The DIY ethic moved from marginal to mainstream in the post-war era as raw materials, qualified trades people, labour and available funds were in short supply, and specialised knowledge, tools, ready-to-use components and pre-prepared materials[3] became increasingly available to the non-professional (Dingle, 2000; Hoftijzer, 2009b). Today, particularly in countries obsessed with homeownership such as the UK and Australia and exemplified by the *Great Australian Dream,*[4] large numbers of people continue to seek ways to improve their domestic environment without engaging qualified designers or builders. People are choosing to renovate their homes for profit and pleasure rather than thrift, with a focus on self and

[3] Such as laminated boards, pre-drilled components, and timber fittings already profiled and undercoated, for example skirting boards and doorframes.
[4] Owning a house is seen as a symbol of success, security and a better life. The mass adoption of this belief has led to urbanisation and urban sprawl, and is discussed in chapter 3.

lifestyle transformation (Allon, 2008; Rosenberg, 2011). This research aims to explore the concept of *lifestyle* as a way of living that can be created or changed by individuals through direct engagement with the fabric of home, and investigate what role the designer might play in DIY home improvement projects.

Although widely used in conjunction with the home as a focus of consumption (real estate, retail and service provision), the term lifestyle is inadequately defined in the literatures of architecture/building design and design research. Lifestyle, when taken broadly to indicate a person's (or household's) tangible and intangible *ways of living*, is also poorly understood by architects[5] as it extends beyond the aesthetic and functional requirements of a home, outside their normal scope of work and excluded from usual project briefs.[6] The lines of inquiry in this study evolved in response to changing commercial pressures on designers, particularly architects, to identify more viable markets; and in response to wider debates on design as a discipline in crisis (Atkinson, 2009; Bremner & Rogers, 2013; Richardson, 1993; Yee & Bremner, 2011).

This thesis addresses these limitations, arguing through the translation of "human values into tangible experiences" (Tunstall, 2013), designers can play a greater role in facilitating DIY home modification, and in doing so engage in more effective and collaborative ways with the transformation of client lifestyles. Through a better understanding of DIY home improvement, this thesis contends that designers can engage with a broader range of clients, specifically those embracing the process of creation, construction and inhabitation rather than the occupation of a finished building (Ingold, 2011; Lees, 2001).

The analysis of collected data tests and further develops a core research concept based on "the idea of building as entangling or weaving" (Vannini & Taggart, 2013a,

[5] Arguably also by other design professionals.
[6] Even though professional designers are expected to generate visions and identify opportunities surpassing the brief requirements and client expectations, most are not equipped to develop an understanding of more complex and intangible patterns of living in relation to their client's current or future home.

p. 3), to identify connection(s) between design, DIY and the construction of lifestyle. The thesis presents a multi-dimensional interpretation of this relationship, exploring lifestyle as:

(i) a provocation for change and consumption,
(ii) a way of living under constant modification, and
(iii) the focus of design and DIY practices.

The collaborative and emergent process of inquiry ultimately reveals bricolage as the research methodology. As a process that embraces anthropological insights and theoretical understandings of practice, it also transcends disciplinary boundaries and values indeterminacy.

Thesis structure

Six chapters map the main aspects of investigation:

Chapter One: Developing the brief introduces the study design, thesis structure, research questions and significance, and previews the development of an inquiry concept. Five key topics emerging from the questions are introduced as research *threads* weaving through the thesis. Perceptions of lifestyle are explored within the context of media and popular culture, and through *practices* linked with the transformation of home—design, DIY and consumption. Subsequently the threads were identified as: *lifestyle*, *context, design, doing* and *having.*

Chapter Two: Methods toolbox informs on the emergence of *bricolage* as the study methodology and describes methods used to collect and analyse the primary data; introducing participants, DIY resource material, lifestyle survey, participant interviews and case study comprising three DIY projects.

Chapter Three: Mapping the field outlines main fields of knowledge and literature review of available data supporting the investigation. This chapter appraises the core theoretical and topical background surrounding and including the five key

research threads. Main themes directly informing on the site and characteristics of practice(s) in the study are identified as: *home*, *transformation, creativity* and *bricolage*. Themes and threads were located in wider fields of knowledge associated with design, anthropology and practice, together with material culture and consumption studies.

Chapter Four: Dreamscape transformation examines data gathered from field exploration and interaction with study participants during the course of investigation, building the five research threads; *context*, *having*, *doing*, *design* and *lifestyle*, as they run through each stage of inquiry.

Chapter Five: Constructing lifestyle discusses the range of findings as they reconstruct the inquiry relationship and highlight key outcomes including *self-place*, *self-actualization* and *hybridity*, together with a review of the inquiry concept and redefining of lifestyle. This chapter also considers the significance of findings in a wider context.

Chapter Six: Conclusion summarises the key findings on the relationship between lifestyle, design process and DIY, and reflects on the study, the suitability of the methodology and the implications of the findings, proposing further avenues of research.

Document layout

The style and layout of the thesis draws on the multiple interpretations of *bricolage* in contemporary use:

> (i) a creative DIY practice after the original meaning of the word *bricolage* in French (Hoftijzer, 2009a; Wilde, 2008), and
>
> (ii) a technique of organisation allowing for the appropriation, alteration and combination of material in order to create a new product (Hutchinson, 2008); exemplified by the *collage* publication style of typical DIY home

improvement manuals such as 'le manual du bricoleur' (Figure 1.1[7]) or DIY retail magazines such as 'Mr Bricolage'.

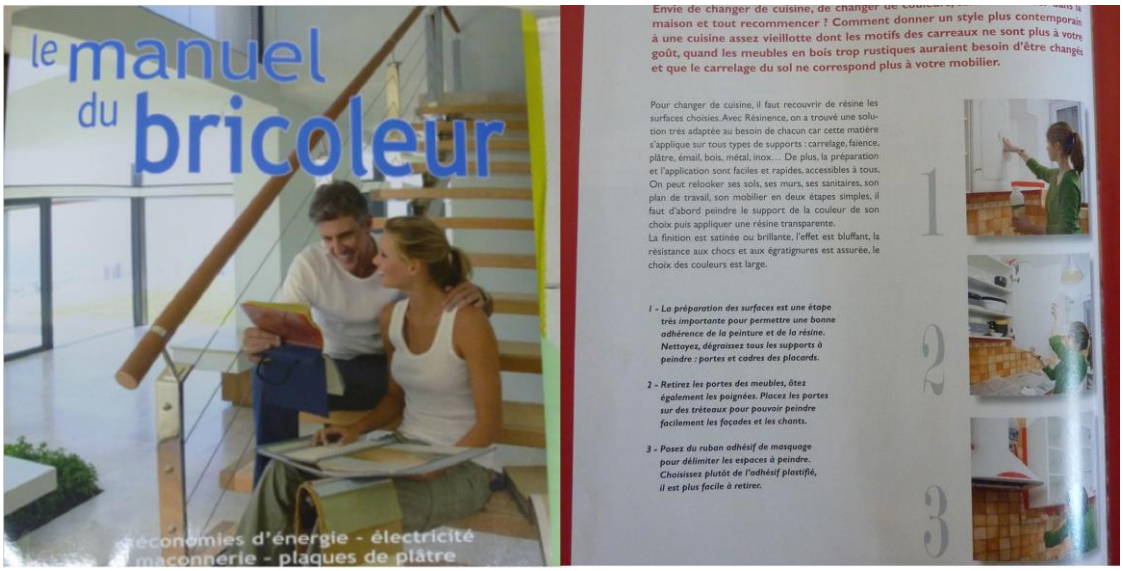


Figure 1.1: DIY manual example

Typically, DIY publications gather an expansive range of information in a lively assemblage of chapters, text, images, diagrams and graphic inserts as highlighters or reminders. Adopting a similar method of presentation, the thesis includes a number of graphic cues to highlight key issues and facilitate navigation (Figure 1.2).

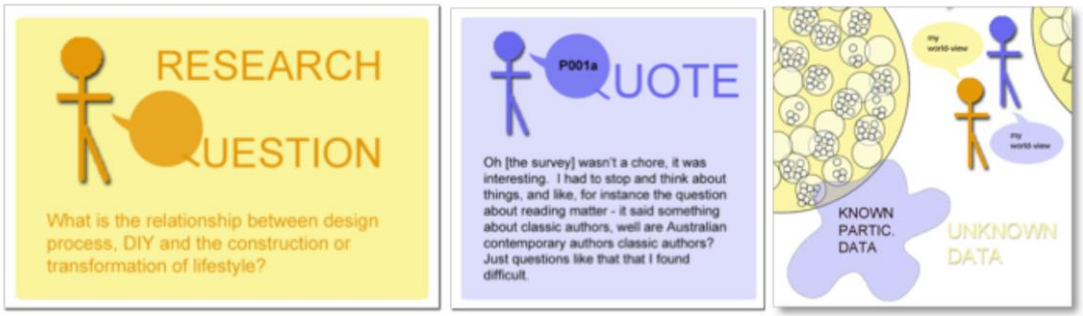


Figure 1.2: Sample of visual cues and graphic inserts used in thesis

As for DIY manuals, the thesis is structured around different types of information:

[7] Source: Cover and extract from 'Le manuel du bricoleur' (Meyer, Thiebaut, & Bierling, 2008).

1. The *how to* information—in this study broadly identified as *use practices*; mainly communicating techniques used for engaging with materials, tools and skills, for example tasks such as cutting, holding, nailing and painting.

2. The *what to* information—in this study broadly identified as *design practices*; mainly providing suggestions or ideas as starting points for generating new projects or developing improvement options for projects already identified.

Drawing the five key research threads, *lifestyle, context, design, doing* and *having*, through a broad spectrum of mapping exercises and through the lens of design *with* anthropology, the two sets of practice—design and use—emerge critical to this research. The thesis structure itself reflects the creative mode of expression and the descriptive intention of the DIY manuals wherever feasible, conveying the complexity of multiple practices and processes, and the many contexts and experiences resulting from engagement with home-improvement projects.

Chapter 1: Developing the brief

1.0 Overview

This chapter provides an overview of the study, introducing the main areas of investigation, overarching research questions and proposed inquiry concept, highlighting key aspects of significance.

1.1 Research inquiry

The focus for this study materialised while searching for a meaningful definition of *lifestyle* in Australia, one that captures current perceptions of day-to-day ways of living at home and useful for designers, design professionals and design researchers. One approach was to investigate aspects of design in day-to-day human behaviour; how people create new practices to suit their capabilities, resources and motivations, such as through people's direct engagement in home-based projects. Self-navigated renovation, DIY home construction, was subsequently explored as an activity directed towards realising dreams of a better life.

Proposed questions

In setting out to explore and map the multi-dimensional relationship between design process, lifestyle and home renovation on a DIY basis, the research design sought evidence of:

> (i) The concept of lifestyle *as a design influenced way of living*; one that can be constructed and manipulated through DIY, and
>
> (ii) DIY *as a creative practice* centred on home and self-improvement and the transformation of lifestyle.

As an evolving inquiry it would have been counter-productive to fix the research questions at the beginning of the study, rather, a wide net was cast over the area of research interest and two tentative research questions were established:

RQ 1. What is the relationship between design process, DIY and the construction or transformation of lifestyle?

RQ 2. Is there a difference in the way designers and non-designers conceptualise, plan and realise their DIY projects?

As the data gathering process gained traction, it was possible to identify and later refine lines of inquiry and prominent topics. Consequently, the two overarching research questions were further defined by sub-questions and a series of diagrammatic studies lead to the development of an inquiry concept.

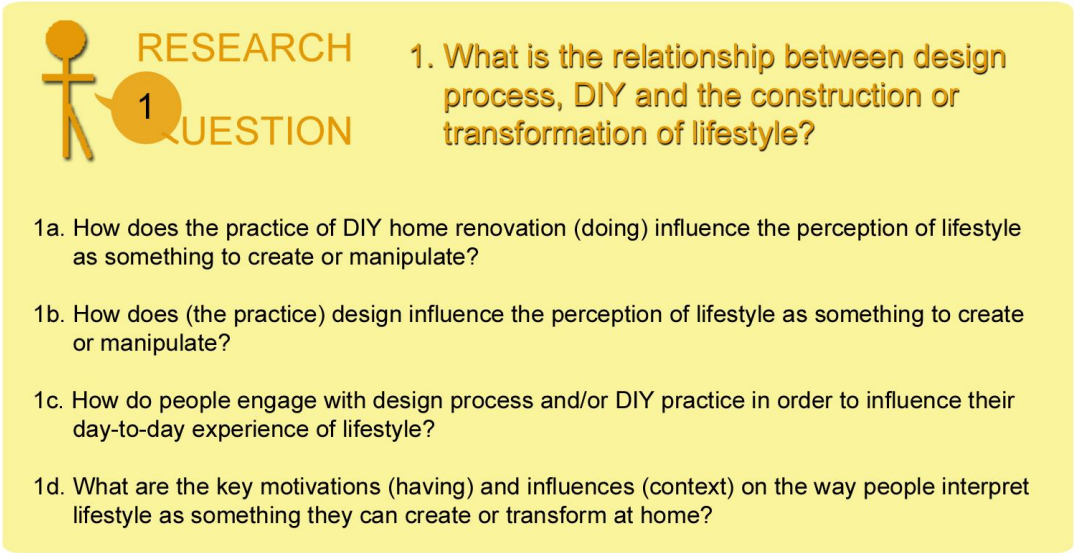


Figure 1.3: Research question 1 with sub-questions

Addressing the first research question with sub-questions (Figure 1.3) necessitated mapping relationships and connections between the five key themes, *context*, *design*, *doing*, *having* and *lifestyle*. Focusing on these themes, this research sought gaps, cracks and overlaps in the inquiry concept to better explore the notion of *lifestyle* as something individuals can create and shape for themselves at home. Evidence of relationships between multiple practices—making and use, production

and consumption, improvisation and appropriation—was framed by insight gained through anthropology (Figure 1.6).

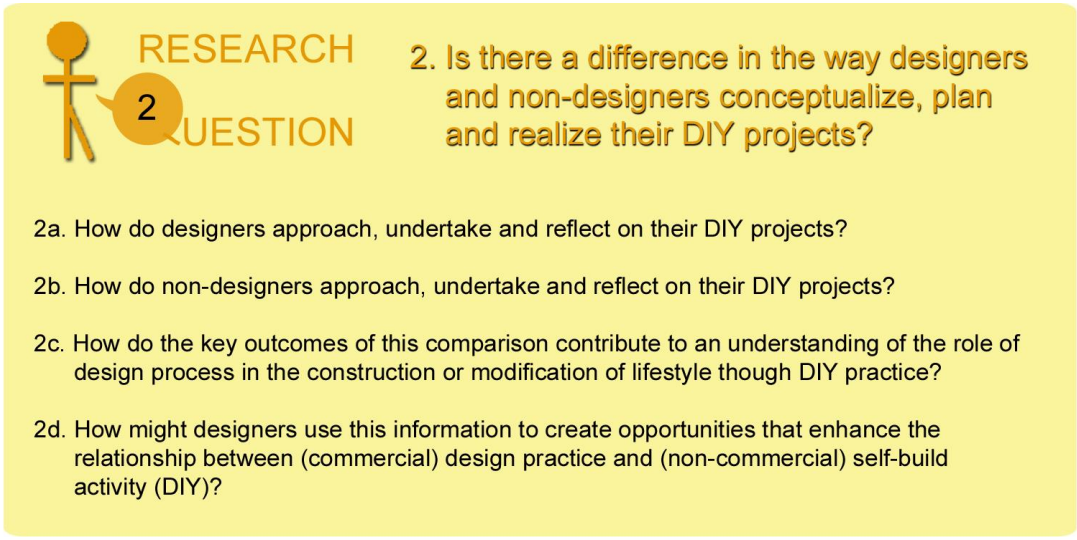


Figure 1.4: Research question 2 with sub-questions

The second research question and sub-questions (Figure 1.4) guided the search for evidence of design process within DIY practice, and how participants with different background experience approached their own home-based projects. To explore relational aspects of the inquiry and cultivate possibilities for new connections between *design* and the other four key themes/threads, the research necessarily questioned the nature of design process within the context of DIY.

Comparing the DIY practice of designers and non-designers revealed the extent to which design included the realisation or *making real* of an idea or vision. Buchanan's description of design as "the human power of conceiving, planning, and making" (2001, p. 9), presents a spectrum of activity that extends to *making*, the inclusion of which has been the subject of scholarly debate.[8] Some consider making an essential part of design process, a form of exploration facilitating and underpinning design with applications varying in scale from craft[9] to mass

[8] For example, 'Specifying something to be made or done' 7-9 January 2014, discussion between scholars contributing to the PhD-Design research forum hosted by JISCmail.
[9] Attiwill highlights the potential craft theory has for "offering new ways of moving and thinking" (Attiwill, 2000, p. 33), relevant to DIY where meaning is created through practice, participation and bodily engagement. DIY is later discussed as a form of *craft consumption*, yet as a mode of production, DIY has been largely overlooked in literature.

manufacture (Crawford, 2009; Krippendorff, 2006). Gauntlett, for example, defines making as "connect[ing] things together (material, ideas, or both) to make something new … [and] transforming one's own sense of self" (2011, p. 245).

Alternatively, designers produce and communicate visions or representations of something that others realise, essentially separating out making as the realm of technicians and skilled workers. According to Fischer, Lemke and McCall "construction [defined as] transactions of designers with materials and artifacts … may have to be carried out in the abstract (e.g., on the drafting board)" (1991, p. 395). The relation between different aspects of the design process, specifically conceptualisation, planning and realisation, was explored through participants' DIY projects.

Although it is unusual for architects to engage in the physical building work necessary in realising their ideas, indeed, in this sense design is a collaborative process with many stakeholders contributing to the *designed* outcome, DIY home renovators typically take on all stages of the work and responsibility for the end result. This is not to suggest that DIY is any more or less collaborative or social than professionally organised build projects, rather to highlight the compression of key factors—processes, practices, skills and access to resources—in DIY unraveled in the study. Seeking opportunities for cultivating new relationships between designers and non-designers working on home renovation projects, the study subsequently investigated instances of collaboration and co-creation between participants with different skills and levels of experience, and explored the notion of *hybridity* as applied to practitioner roles and activities, or practices.

Inquiry concept

In setting out to explore the relationship between design, home-improvement on a DIY basis and the creation of lifestyle, the research inquiry was initially defined by five key topics, the first as a composite of the remainder:

- *Lifestyle* - ways of living resulting from influences and motivations driving change-making activity, and subsequent activity to include planning and constructing
- *Design* - conceiving/conceptualising + planning activity
- *Doing* - making + realising/constructing activity
- *Having* - internal motivations and ownership oriented activity[10] driving change-making activity
- *Context* - external influences driving change-making activity

These topics were embedded in the research questions and also intertwined with each other through the practice of DIY; hence subsequently identified as the key *threads* weaving through the research. In parallel, the home under transformation - the site of inquiry, was found to be an *entanglement* of past, present and future patterns of living, and processes weaving together human and non-human things (Ingold, 2008; Shove, 2007). Addressing research questions, then, was at once about untangling the threads from each other and the site of inquiry, and about identifying gaps and overlaps between them.

The key focus of inquiry, *lifestyle* is conceptualised as something created or modified by the activities or practices taking place during home modification, themselves shaped by internal (personal motivations) and external (social and cultural influences) pressures. Emerging at the nexus of all threads, *lifestyle* was placed at the centre of the concept and subsequently explored as the focus of a dreamscape, a field of dreams connecting everyday reality with an idealised vision of the future, as discussed in chapter 3. The three practice oriented threads, *doing*, *design* and *having*, were considered of direct influence on each other and on the creation or modification of lifestyle, and were subsequently positioned as interlinked threads. The thread *context* escaped specificity yet assisted in situating the other threads in a bounded area and conceptual background.

[10] Shove suggests the "cultural significance of ownership [includes] … accounts of novelty, renewal and acquisition" (2007, p. 15).

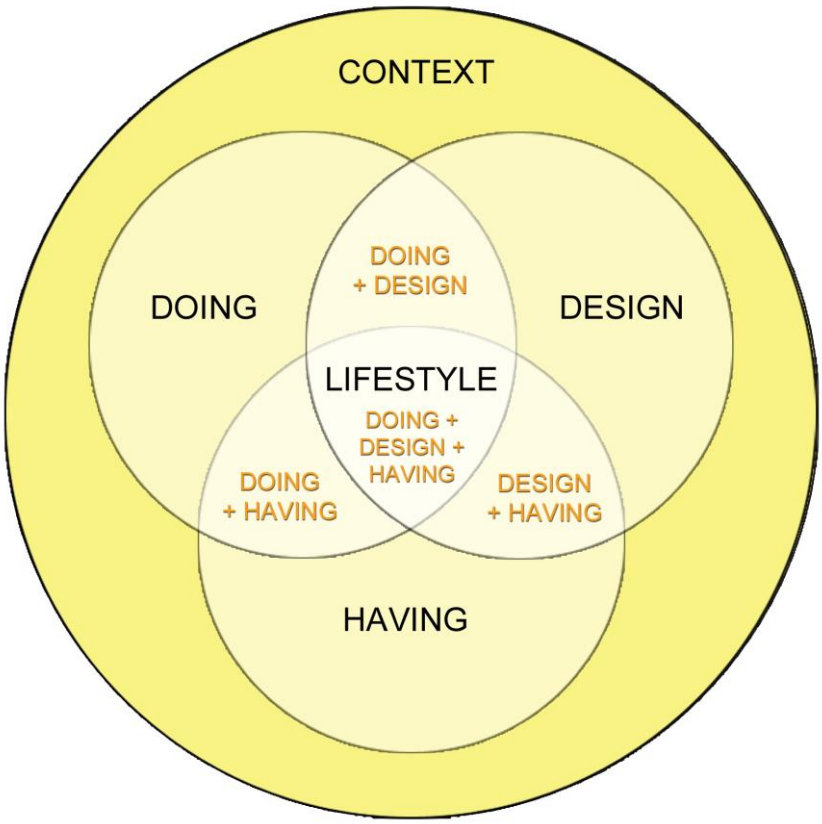


Figure 1.5: Research inquiry concept

Just as the research questions were tentative frames of inquiry, the threads and the connection between them was also tentative. A visual representation of the inquiry concept was developed as a sketch hypothesis of the relationship under investigation, providing a starting point for exploration (Figure 1.5).

Logic of inquiry

The study design touched a wide range of subject areas and crossed disciplinary boundaries in order to explore an inquiry with five threads, including material/consumer culture, anthropology and social/cultural studies, together with design practice and processes.

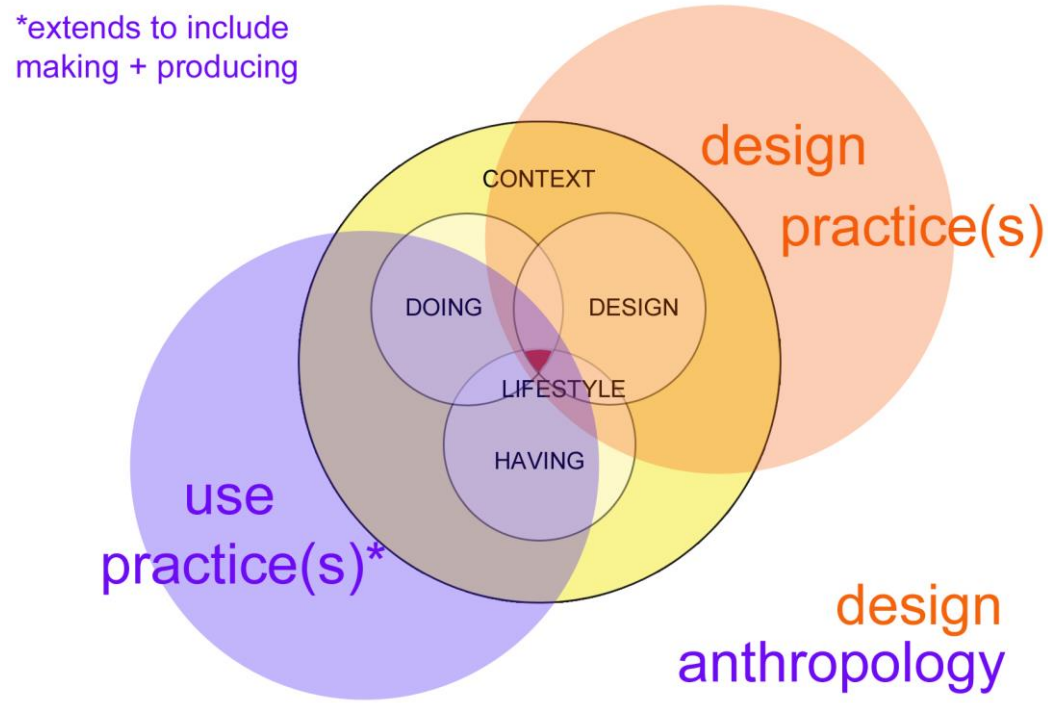


Figure 1.6: Inquiry concept framed by design and anthropology

Placing this research purposefully in the overlap between two key fields, design and anthropology, facilitated an emergent qualitative approach to the interpretation of the research inquiry concept and subsequent data analysis (Figure 1.6). Key research questions focused on the influence of design on human experience, and visa versa, thus placing the study in a pluralistic-oriented paradigm accommodating interactive, responsive and reflective inquiry; looking at the construction and interpretation of meaning and value. Framing the study in this way, aspects of design anthropology also supported investigation into the "relation between design practices(s) and use practice(s) … [and] the interrelations between perception, skill and creativity, designing and using" (Gunn & Donovan, 2012b, pp. xv-xvi). Design and use practices are discussed further in section 3.5.

This study uses ethnographic research methods in combination with the process of design and theoretical concepts from anthropology and social science to explore the relationship between design and DIY, and the notion of practice. Even through the application of alternative theoretical approaches can be problematic, bricolage methodology, a multi-theoretical form of inquiry, necessitated exploration of

boundary-crossing issues and apparent incompatibility. In order to progress discussions on the use of bricolage methodology in design, and to investigate multiple routes into the social world of practitioners, different theoretical approaches were used comparatively (refer Appendix 4).

From a design perspective, practice theory, "a body of work about the work of the body" (Postill, 2010, p.11), often used in association with anthropological theories, offers a network of approaches to understanding practice, both individual activity and wider to include cultural and social patterns of behaviour. These approaches, found "in subfields as diverse as strategy theory, political anthropology, material culture studies, the sociology of consumption and neuroscience" (ibid.), offer valuable avenues for connecting change-making disciplines such as design with social science disciplines. To advance conceptualization of lifestyle as a design influenced way of living driven by creative and change-oriented activity, this study considers various perspectives on practice, including the work of:

- Sherry Ortner on cultural practice and the circular relationship between individuals and their social structure,
- Theodore Schatzki on social life and social practices,
- Andreas Reckwitz on routines and the individual as the crossing point of practices,
- Alan Warde on the sociology of consumption and integrative practices,
- Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi on the rewards of practice as flow,
- Elizabeth Shove on leisure and domestic practices, and
- Tim Ingold on use practices/improvisation.

The inquiry necessarily sought an understanding of lifestyle as (i) a composition of several things—behaviours, practices, motivations, influences and situations, and (ii) as a key part of a wider composition (Figure 1.7). The research thus took both an *analytical* approach, understanding lifestyle as a construction of five key threads, at the outset considered with equal weight, and a *synthetic* approach, locating

lifestyle among broader themes, as one aspect of our contemporary lives under change (Tromp & Hekkert, 2012).

Most inquiry methods used to explore individual influences and the relationship between them favour the analytical approach. However, practice theory takes a more synthetic approach, which according to Trompe and Hekkert, accords more closely with a design *with* anthropology approach, as it:

> Clarifies the 'shaping' role of design… With specific awareness of the dynamic, interacting factors that make up human life, the designer may better understand where to intervene when aiming to change behaviours. (2012, p. 204)

The study methodology takes an approach that seeks to simultaneously embrace many levels of focus; both analytic and synthetic approaches are valuable to this inquiry and to the comprehension of lifestyle through different lenses.

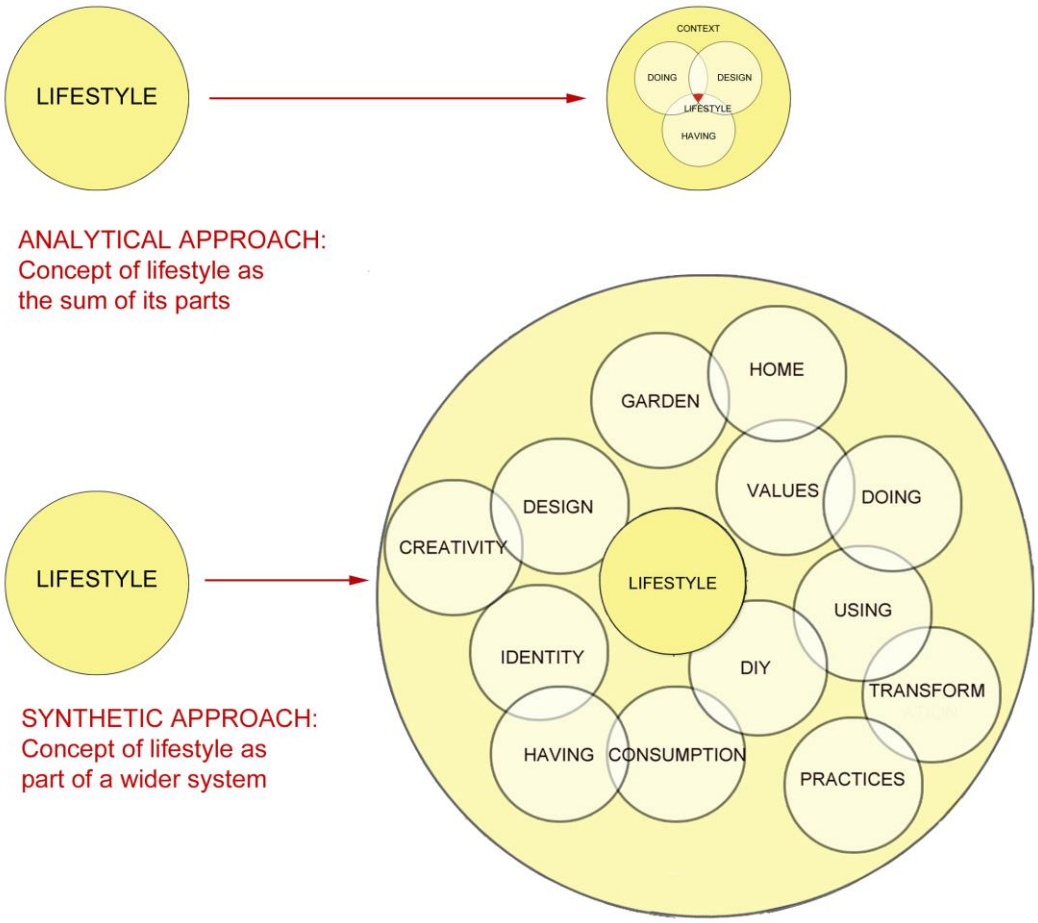


Figure 1.7: Inquiry approaches to concept

1.2 Research contribution

This study is intended to benefit designers, the design profession and design researchers, as well as non-designers who work in collaboration with designers or engage with design research or practice. The research draws on a broad range of themes, topics and disciplines, including the emerging field of design anthropology, to generate a contextualised understanding of design and/or creative processes when applied beyond the formal boundaries of design professions. This section proposes eight areas where this research finds new ground, highlighting the value of design as a process bridging research *and* practice, consumption *and* creativity, expert *and* amateur, experiences *and* expectations of lifestyle.

Significance of the study

1. Approach and methodology

To date there are few doctoral design theses identifying the contribution of a design *with* anthropology approach to investigation and analysis, or *bricolage methodology* as a framework for study. Explicitly referencing the interface between design and anthropology, some authors working in the emerging field of *design anthropology*, are doctoral theses by Joachim Halse (2008) on participation and performance, Kyle Kilbourn (2008) on enskillment in health and Mette Kjaersgaard (2011) on the challenges presented for a new field.[11] A small number of research studies on subject matter primarily linking innovative technology and product development with behaviour, education and health (Bjorgvinsson, 2007; Bowan, 2009; Donovan, 2011; Horst, 2011; Wallace, 2010), have been referenced in recent publications that introduce design *and* anthropology as a combined field (Clarke, 2011; Gunn & Donovan, 2012b). Theses applying bricolage methodology mostly investigate

[11] Only the first thesis is available outside of Denmark in digital format.

aspects of pedagogy,[12] with only one located with relevant design-related content, a study of urban computing and locative media (Galloway, 2008).[13] The paper "Design as bricolage: Anthropology meets design thinking" suggests a connection between design, anthropology and bricolage but does not address bricolage as a methodology, rather as a form of practice, further the paper does not explore the connection between anthropology and design (Louridas, 1999).

The scarcity of precedent doctoral theses is partly due to the emergent nature of both the interface between design and anthropology, and bricolage methodology, breaking with traditional disciplinary boundaries and embracing a broader approach such as adopting a practice-led focus (Kilbourn, 2010; Markham, 2005; Wibberley, 2012).[14] Additionally, reaching "a new level of complexity, rigor and usefulness" (Kinchloe, 2004, xii) through bricolage methodology was not considered feasible within the time limitations of most doctoral programmes (Helms, Irby, Lara-Alecio, Guerrero-Valecillos, & Cox, 2009; Kincheloe, 2005; Yee & Bremner, 2011). Further, according to Yee & Brember, "models of design research are still poorly defined, with vague characteristics and generalized approaches" (2011, p. 2).

This thesis, in responding to these gaps, acknowledges and embraces *both* the overlap between design and anthropology, and bricolage methodology, as valuable contributions to design research, and is presented as a Point of Entry Text (POET) arising from practice-led inquiry (Kinchloe & Berry, 2004). As a professional, my approach is embedded in a disciplinary perspective, utilizing familiar tools and patterns of practice. Professional skills and experience have contributed to data collection, documentation techniques and the use of visualisation tools[15] for analysis. In short, the methodological needs of design researchers like myself contrast sharply with traditional text-based academic research methods.

[12] Bricolage methodology has primarily been adopted for education-oriented research in USA and Canada, with recognition of its potential more recent in UK.
[13] Subject: Urban computing and locative media.
[14] To date there are few specific design anthropology research programmes, with notable exceptions being offered by the University of Aberdeen, UK, Swinburne University, Melbourne, and the University of Southern Denmark.
[15] For example, diagrams, illustrations, and conceptual sketches.

2. Specificity of location

This study builds on material culture and consumption related research, in particular the 'Cultures of Consumption Programme' and the 'Consumption Everyday Life & Sustainability Programme',[16] both focus on studies predominantly in Britain, but also USA, Canada and Europe (Watson & Shove, 2008). Seminal research works on theories of practice, including "family members as everyday designers" (Wakkery & Maestri, 2007, p. 172), and the phenomenon of DIY home and garden improvement, have also been carried out in the UK, Canada and USA rather than in Australia (Head & Muir, 2006; C. C. Williams, 2004).

Of Australian origin only two sources were of sufficient relevance to be considered as precedent studies, the 'Australian Everyday Consumption Project' (AECP)(Bennett, Emmison, & Frow, 1999; Bennett & Watson, 2002), and an economics thesis on home renovation in Queensland (Peng, 2009). Contributing to the small body of work generated in Australia, this research collects and analyses data from Australian sources as well as embracing expatriate home locations in Asia including Hong Kong.

3. Specificity of content

Of the existing studies on DIY activity and everyday design, only Elizabeth Shove has addressed DIY as a combination of design process and physical practice, however, the background data was collected in the UK. Shove makes four key observations about gaps in research about the practice of DIY:

> (i) [DIY] constitutes a significant but relatively unexplored domain of both consumption and practice…. DIY is a field in which the relation between tools, materials and competence is plainly significant…. The process is typically transformative, both of those involved and of the physical objects and structures on which they work. (2007, p. 43)
>
> (ii) Despite its scale and significance as a social phenomenon, DIY does not figure prominently in social scientific or historical analyses, either of leisure or consumption. (2007, p. 45)

[16] Specifically Elizabeth Shove's contribution.

(iii) Missing … but what a practice orientation undoubtedly requires, is an interpretation that takes due account of the sweat, sawdust, frustrations and satisfactions generated through the active combination of bodies, tools, materials and existing structures, all of which are implicated in … improving the home. (2007, p. 49)

(iv) [Despite} isolated acknowledgements of the role of *doing* it yourself, existing discussions attend to the social and cultural qualities of the activity in the most general of terms…. [They] skate over many more compelling issues … the immediate pleasures, challenges, satisfactions and annoyances of tackling projects around home or for the seemingly autotelic nature of DIY. (2007, p. 50)

Where possible, the research addresses these areas identified by Shove as missing from current academic enquiry, including the physicality of DIY, measures of skill and competence, and the transient episodes of "mess and disruption" (2007, p. 5) often difficult to capture. Contributions are made to the distribution of competence between human and artefact (Shove, 2007), between human and "non-human actors: materials and spaces" (Vannini & Taggart, 2013a, p. 2), and the skills required by the DIY practitioner to achieve a level of sufficiency on a creative as well as "on a functional and economic level" (Atkinson, 2006, p. 6).

4. Identifying transformative behaviour

This study revisits and challenges accepted notions of creativity, motivation and the psychology of home-making behaviour, directed at "opening up lines of inquiry … tackling the difficult and value-laden domain of change and transformation" (Kilbourn, 2010, p. 9). Behavioural patterns are observed as DIY practitioners take on various roles, exploring variations resulting from:

> Differences between 'pro-active' DIY, which contained self-directed creative design input, and 'reactive' DIY, characterized by the aid of kits, patterns, the assembly of pre-determined components. (Hoftijzer, 2009a, p. 74)

Specifically, the findings build on discussions of the creative and transformative nature of DIY activity (Jackson, 2010), and the situated and social nature of DIY as a *serious leisure* activity (Stebbins, 2007). Above all, this research expands on the

experience of those at the centre of the self-imposed change-making process who "want to be creative and engage in creative ways of living" (Sanders & Stappers, 2012, p. 15).

5. Defining lifestyle

In a 1976 paper sociologists Zablocki and Kanter build a convincing argument for ongoing investigation of "life-style … life-style groupings … [and the] causal relationship among socioeconomic status, life-style and tastes" (1976, p. 294), an argument still valid today. The authors claim:

> Future sociological research should be addressed not to the analysis of particular life-styles themselves, but to the process of transition of individuals among life-styles with the hope of discovering patterns of life-style mobility and characteristic life-style careers. (ibid.)

This research explores current references to lifestyle, models the concept and constructs a definition better suited to design disciplines. Used in conjunction with three other notions capable of plasticity, *design*, *having* and *doing*, the concept provides designers with insights on the transitional nature of lifestyle-oriented behaviour.

6. Extending insights on design process and practice

This study investigates the design process of professional practitioners working on their home rather than a commercial project, without the restrictions of legislation, regulation and other constraints, and without pressure to meet "requirements for efficiency, safety, robustness, [and] reliability".[17] The dislocation of boundaries highlights new issues of significance not only in relation to individual(s) at the centre of the activity, but to the context and change making process itself. Furthermore, the departure from usual patterns of work raises questions about change, and how the outcome of designing is assessed: "judged by what criteria? How judged? By who?"[18]

[17] Tim Smithers contribution to the PhD-Design research forum hosted by JISCmail discussion thread "Ideas and definition of what is 'a design' in a broad sense", 4 April 2013.
[18] Ibid.

Roles are seen to shift as designers move further from the confines of work projects, and take on roles of client and builder. Design emerges as a process linked with everyday creativity, sometimes leading to *design*-it-yourself practices,[19] and competence-based approaches to design challenges in the home (Butcher, 2008; Wakkery & Maestri, 2007).

Acknowledging Herbert Simon's definition of design as the "transformation of existing conditions into preferred ones" (1969, p. 55), practitioners dominating the design role in a project are considered to be *experts* taking a *designerly* approach. By implication, non-designers who make aesthetic and material decisions rather take a *creative* approach,[20] however, the findings reveal that non-designers can and do play a crucial part in the process of design (C. D. Smith, 2012). Engaging with design beyond the realm of professional practice, exploring non-professional situations where the designer applies skills and tools outside the office, free from disciplinary expectations and controls, this study has uncovered the collaborative and transformative potential of facilitating design amongst stakeholders.

7. Identifying opportunities for design practitioners

The call for designers to engage in transformative roles is not new,[21] neither is the focus on the experience of the user, or their participation in design, however, there is still resistance among some professional disciplines to embrace collective or co-design practices (Kuhn & Muller, 1993; Sanders & Stappers, 2012). This research presents a specific situation in which the designer, as "intelligent maker and … knowledge worker" (Press & Cooper, 2003, p. 198), contributes more fully to the creative experience of others, and engages with transformation design (Bonner, 2008; Burns, Cottam, Vanstone, & Winhall, 2006).

[19] As distinct from 'DIY design' used in relation to self-build designers who are thinking about architecture as a "way of making", often at the most basic level of construction (Heathcote, 2013).
[20] The approach of non-designers as "unqualified individuals" to DIY building projects has also been described as "artisanal", referring to the process, materials and tools as well as the practitioner (C. D. Smith, 2012, p. 9).
[21] For example, RED - set up in 2004 by the Design Council, UK, promoted 'transformation design' as a way of applying design skills in non-traditional situations, although to date little has emerged from the Red Paper 02 (2006) proposals.

The case study component of this research explored the relationship between current architectural practice, where the design output as a built form results in new patterns of living for the homeowner, both intentional and incidental, and other more subtle outcomes of design emerging during home improvement projects. The findings offer possibilities for *generative design* practice in relation to home improvement, allowing architects to move from "the experts in their domain" (Sanders & Stappers, 2012, p. 9) to co-designers within many domains. Given this broader role, this research finds that designers' skills and tools can help individuals make informed choices about their relationship with the material world that surrounds them:

> People often use things far beyond what designers expect. People actively intervene in configuring products and systems in the very processes of their consumption. A process of design thus is not to impose closure but to allow for everyday life to carry on. (Gunn & Donovan, 2012a, p. 1)

Creative activities such as DIY, largely self-directed, provide an opportunity for design facilitation rather than control, for designers to empower others, guide individual creativity and encourage exploration of ideas as a valuable experience in its own right. With a *more* participatory mindset, architects are well placed to address the need for longevity of building stock and reducing building related consumption, incrementally rather than radically improving the way we live (Ballantyne, 2011).

8. Influencing consumption through design and use practices

This study contributes knowledge on the relationship between DIY, design and consumption, extending beyond notions of thrift or financial necessity, to explore other motivations behind DIY activity. The influence of media on lifestyle-oriented aspirations, the rewards of self-determination and autonomy, and the appeal of design and creativity are considered in relation to DIY (R. Ryan & Deci, 2000). Additionally DIY is investigated as a social and creative practice, a process of transformation and as an active part of the *experience economy* (Pine II & Gilmore, 1999).

Home oriented design and use practices and patterns of design-and-use based consumption activity have yet to be properly interrogated. This study considers the DIY practitioner as a hybrid of the three categories most often separated in commerce and market research—the client, the design consultant and the user/consumer/persona (Cooper, 2004), as well as a hybrid of the three parties involved in a building project—client, designer and builder. The implications of aspiration-led and practice-led consumption are discussed in the context of DIY, however, more extensive exploration into home renovation practices embracing alternative types of resource use, such as recycling, upcycling, repurposing and refurbishing are critical in the search for less consumptive lifestyles (McDonough & Braungart, 2002; Warde, 2005).

Scope and limitations of the study

This thesis is not intended as a comprehensive text on the home improvement industry, the DIY movement, architectural practice or the notion of *unsustainable lifestyles*[22] in relation to consumption or housing development (Clugston, 2008; World Wildlife Fund, 2010). The study neither sets out to present DIY as a phenomenon that excludes professional input arguing for expert intervention, nor is it a study *of* architectural service(s) arguing for "trends of deprofessionalization" (Schön, 1983, p. 13). Rather the goal is to present a sample tapestry of connections between design and use practices,[23] designers and non-designers, planning and constructing activities; a provocation for further exploration into shaping both imagined and realised ways of living. At the core of this provocation is the development of a conceptual model for lifestyle that is an "effective and empathetic design tool" (Taffe & Barnes, 2009, p. 9).

Informed by personal experience in professional design and DIY practice, the thesis presents a specific context where disciplinary boundaries have appeared overly

[22] According to Living Planet Report, "Australian lifestyles ranked amongst the most sustainable in the world" (World Wildlife Fund, 2010).
[23] Falling within the realm of design anthropology: relations between design and use (making/producing/doing/having) practices.

restrictive, and where value is found in dissolving the interface between traditional roles and processes. This DIY practitioner is considered as a hybrid initiator of design and creativity anticipating transformative experience, rather than as the end user of a design process that starts with perceived consumer needs and ends with standard solutions and homemaker restlessness (Eckersley, 2004; Fry, 2008).

Reducing consumption through modified home making and renovating behaviour, and moving towards more sustainable development are issues that have far-reaching implications. New roles for designers in working towards greater social and environmental sustainability through participatory design and innovation are an important extension of these considerations, but well beyond the scope of this thesis. However, through exploring the activities, motivations and experiences of both designers and non-designers in relation to DIY projects at home, insights have been gained which may contribute to these issues in future research.

1.3 Summary

The study set out to explore the relationship between lifestyle and design process through examination of DIY practice; a creative and transformative activity centred on the improvement of home and everyday way of living. Subsequently, two key research questions and eight sub-questions, plus a mode of inquiry mapping a relationship between five key threads—*context, having, doing, design* and *lifestyle*—constitute the investigation.

The investigation is framed by a design *with* anthropology approach, and structured around various meanings of bricolage. The multiple layers of both inquiry and findings challenge conventional thinking about design and use practices, both separately and as connected activities, and the nature of transformational and creative behaviours. Design process, when identified by specific skills and situations such as architecture, is often confined to and by the professional context, however, when applied on a less structured basis, it is found to have latent potential.

Chapter 2: Methods toolbox

2.0 Overview

This chapter discusses the relevance of *bricolage methodology* to the study, and reflects on the role of researcher as *bricoleur* in the investigation design. The four main methods of data collection are described, together with a brief explanation of participant selection; the network of individuals and couples central to the relational nature of the inquiry. Data analysis and data synthesis methods supported the methodology, contributed to study evolution, and allowed the emergence of undisciplined connections in the spirit of bricolage.

2.1 Bricolage methodology

The multi-layered inquiry guided by key research questions (Figure 2.1) and sub-questions necessitated a qualitative approach sensitive to the "holistic, multi-dimensional and ever changing" (Merriam, 2009, p. 213) reality under investigation, and an interpretive sense making process of analysis (Roberts, 2013). The emergent nature of the relationship explored, and the flexibility required to introduce new models for analysis during the course of the study, subsequently revealed a bricolage methodology.

In defining bricolage methodology, it is informative to begin with what it is *not,* given the many interpretations of this term, originating from the French 'bricoler'. Joe Kincheloe, the main proponent of this methodology,[24] defends criticisms of bricolage as a mixed bag research approach, railing against condemnation of interdisciplinary research as superficial and a "fuzzy concept at best" (2001, p. 685). To Kincheloe multidisciplinary inquiry has become "a magnet for controversy in the

[24] Rather than paraphrase and alter specific meaning or intent, this section includes a number of quotes direct from Kincheloe's writings.

contemporary academy" (2001, p. 680), strongly advocating bricolage as a 'new form' of multi-methodological, and multi-theoretical form of inquiry.

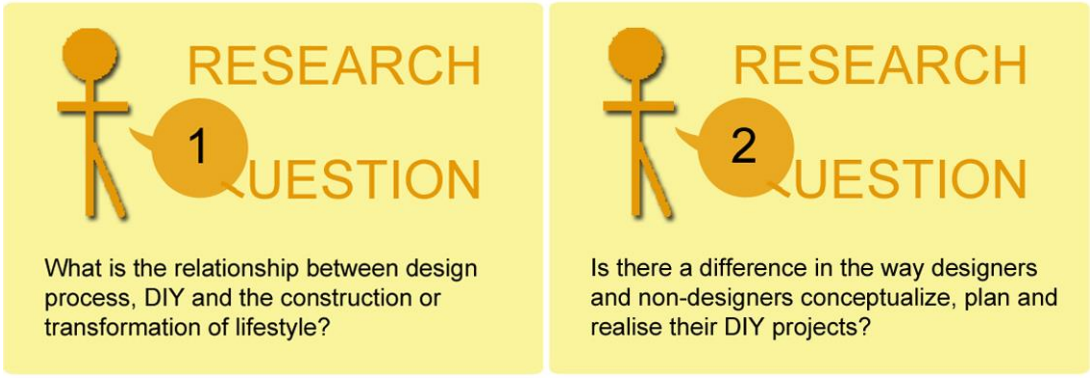


Figure 2.1: Overarching research questions

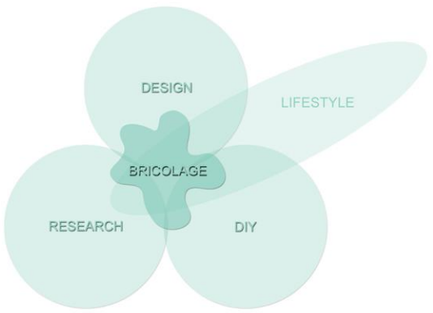
Gray and Malins are also quick to stress that bricolage is in not "a 'pick and mix' research strategy" (2004, p. 74), or should be in no way considered an inferior approach to research than any other method of qualitative study. The authors, like Kincheloe, consider bricolage of value in researching the "complexity and connectedness of reality" (2004, p. 90).

Bricolage methodology thus emerges as a fluid collage of research methods and tools, not restricted by academic traditions but often resisted by academia, derided as a methodological palimpsest. Of significance for this study, Kincheloe felt it was the duty of the bricoleur researcher to uncover the detail hidden within the lived world through "focusing on webs of relationships, instead of things-in-themselves" (2005, p. 323), and work "in the liminal zones where disciplines collide" (2001, p. 689).

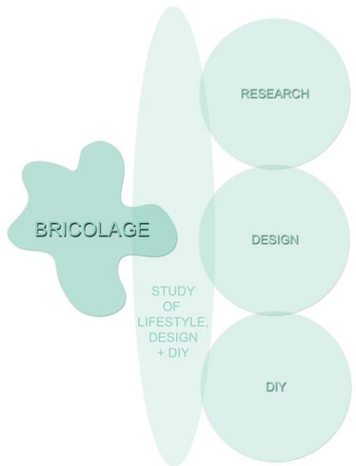
It is this central feature of bricolage that accommodates so well the overlap between design and anthropology, and also a field of study emerging in its own right—design anthropology, with evolving connections "coupling … action and perception" (Gunn & Donovan, 2012b, p. 10). With design, as for anthropology and sociology, there are many established schools of thought, thus where possible this

LOCATING ‘BRICOLAGE’ (FOR METHODOLOGY) IN RESEARCH ASSOCIATED LITERATURE

Indicative mapping of publications onto conceptual landscape of this study.



RESEARCH ‘WITH’ BRICOLAGE - BREADTH OF FIELD:
Fields of knowledge with ‘bricolage’ applications;
1. Research with bricolage methodology
2. Designer with bricolage practice
3. DIYer with bricolage activity
4. Lifestyle with bricolage context



RESEARCH ‘AS’ BRICOLAGE - DEPTH OF FIELD :
Layers of practice as ‘bricoleur’;
1. Researcher as interpretive bricoleur
2. Designer as bricoleur author and informant
3. DIYer as bricoleur participant and collaborator
4. Hybrid practitioner; bricoleur engagement with lifestyle

METHODOLOGICAL INNOVATION IN PRACTICE-BASED DESIGN DOCTORATES
- Joyce Yee (2010), Journal of Research Practice

METHODOLOGICAL BRICOLAGE - WHAT DOES IT TELL US ABOUT DESIGN (RESEARCH)?
- Joyce Yee & Craig Bremner (2011), Doctoral Education in Design Conference, HK - Proceedings

COLLAGE CITY
C. Rowe (1984)
use in architecture - non-research application of term

DESIGN RESEARCH PHD STUDIES PEOPLE FOCUS:
(ref. J. Yee, 2010)
- Darina Loi, 2005

DESIGN RESEARCH PHD STUDIES: PROCESS FOCUS
(ref. J. Yee, 2010)
- Anthony Dunne, 1997 (through and for practice)
- Catherine Dixon, 2001 (through and for practice)
- Darina Loi, 2005 (through and for practice)
- Joe Eastwood, 2006 (through practice)
- Ramia Maze, 2007 (into, through and for practice)
- Bas Raijmakers, 2007 (into, through and for practice)

GEORG SIMMEL: SOCIOLOGICAL FLANEUR BRICOLEUR
- D. + M.A. Weinstein (1991), Theory, Culture & Society

STRUCTURE, SIGN AND PLAY IN THE DISCOURSE OF HUMAN SCIENCES
- Jaques Derrida (1966)

VISUALIZING RESEARCH: A GUIDE TO THE RESEARCH PROCESS IN ART AND DESIGN
- C. Gray + J. Malins (2004)

THE SAVAGE MIND
- C. Levi-Strauss (1966)

WORK AND LIVES: THE ANTHROPOLOGIST AS AUTHOR
- C. Geertz (1988)

HANDBOOK OF QUALITATIVE RESEARCH
- N. Denzin + Y. Lincoln (2000)

SOCIAL BRICOLAGE: THEORIZING SOCIAL VALUE CREATION IN SOCIAL ENTERPRISES
- M. L. Di Dimenico et al. (2010), E T & P, Baylor University

DEMYSTIFYING INTERDISCIPLINARY QUALITATIVE RESEARCH
- Thomas Greckhamerm et al (2008), Qualitative Inquiry

DESIGN RESEARCH PHD STUDY: CONTEXT/RELATIONAL FOCUS
- Nicola D Smith, 2014, (design research located *within* contextual complexity; multiplicity embraced through bricolage methodology)

ANTI-OEDIPUS: CAPITALISM AND SCHIZOPHRENIA
- G. Deluze + F. Guttari (1972)

French translation use in building - non-research application of term

HCI RESEARCH PHD STUDIES: METHODOLOGY FOCUS
(ref. J. Yee, 2012)
- Anne Galloway, 2008

ON TO THE NEXT LEVEL: CONTINUING THE CONCEPTUALIZATION OF THE BRICOLAGE
- Joe L. Kinchloe (2005), Qualitative Inquiry

DESCRIBING THE BRICOLAGE:CONCEPTUALIZING A NEW RIGOR IN QUALITATIVE RESEARCH
- Joe L. Kinchloe (2001), Qualitative Inquiry

BRICKLAYERS AND BRICOLEURS: A MARXIST ADDENDUM
- Peter McLaren (2001), Qualitative Inquiry

PIECING TOGETHER - A METHODOLOGICAL BRICOLAGE
- Ainslie Yardley (2008), Forum: Qualitative Social Research

AN EMERGING NEW BRICOLEUR: PROMISES AND POSSIBILITIES
- Yvonna S. Lincoln (2001), Qualitative Inquiry

THE RESEARCHER AS BRICOLEUR: THE TEACHER AS PUBLIC INTELLECTUAL
- William F. Pinar (2001), Qualitative Inquiry

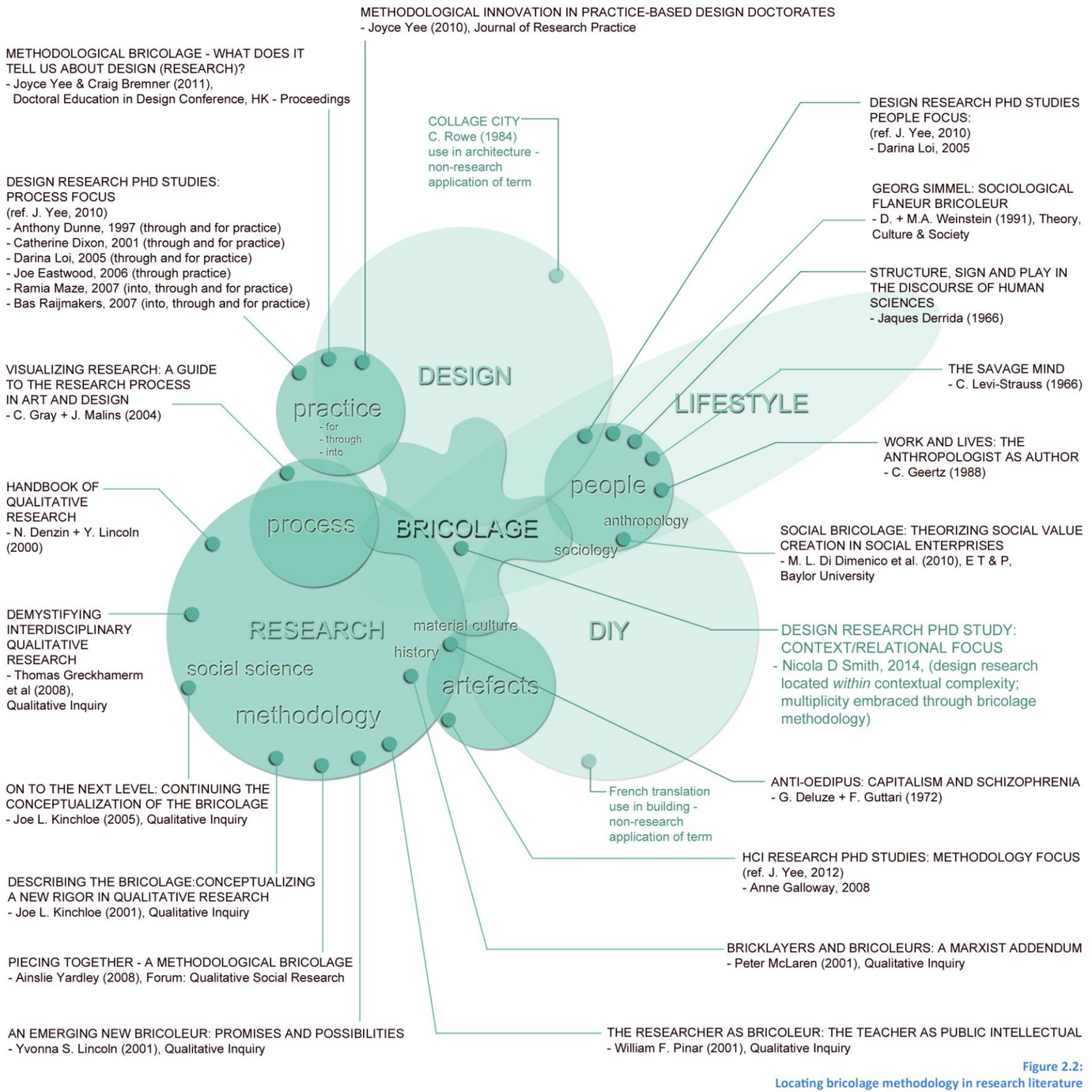
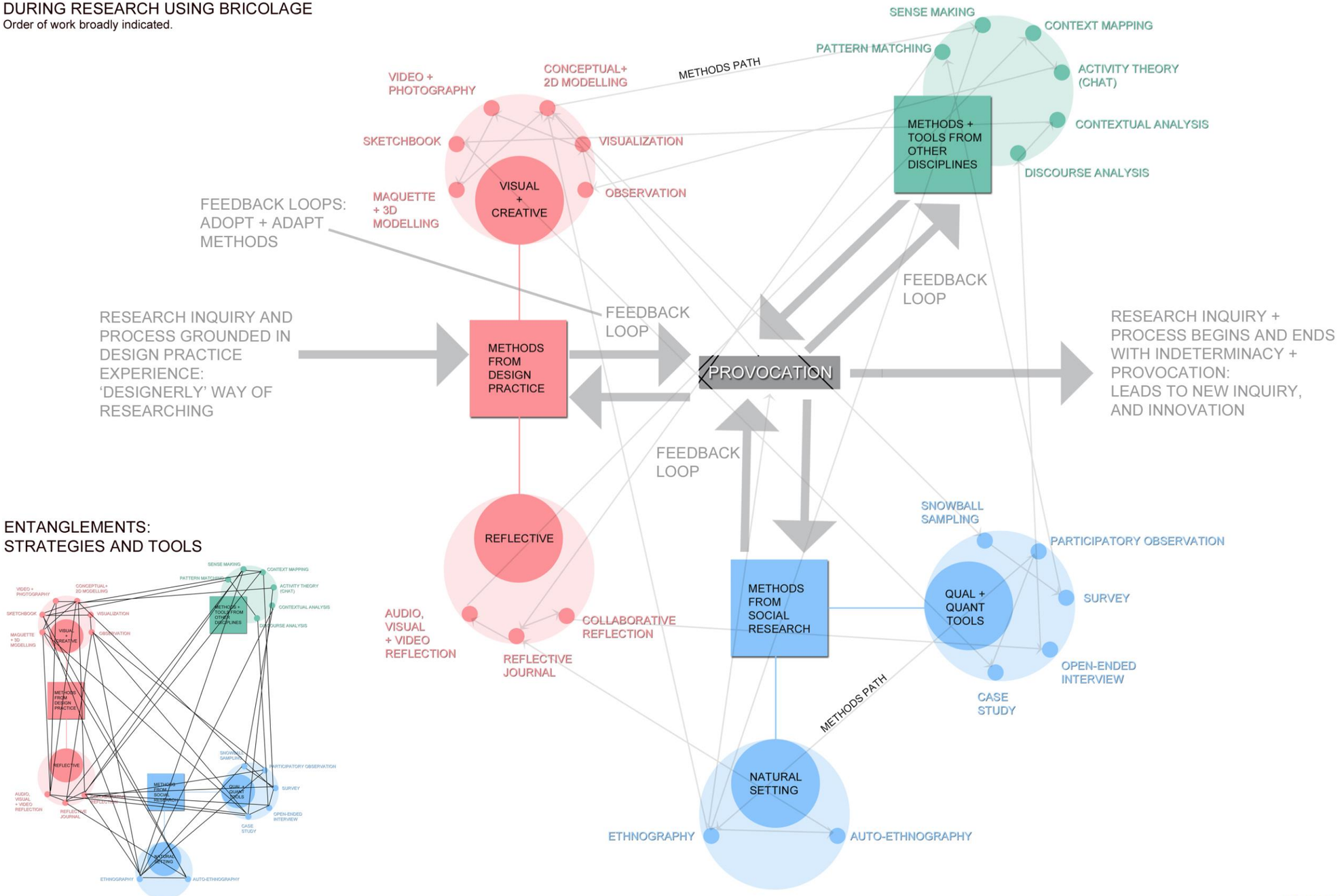


Figure 2.2:
Locating bricolage methodology in research literature

MULTIPLE LOOPS AND PATHWAYS BETWEEN METHODS GENERATED DURING RESEARCH USING BRICOLAGE

Order of work broadly indicated.



ENTANGLEMENTS:
STRATEGIES AND TOOLS

Figure 2.3:
Set of interpretive practices generating bricolage

study has been conducted in the *style* and *intention* of the research bricoleur working across disciplines.

Research findings emerging from multiple disciplines and methods, according to Kincheloe, need to be grounded in "social-theoretical and hermeneutical understandings" (2001, p. 691) in order to properly situate the "relationships and connections" emerging from the data. Kincheloe cites the work of Foster (1997) and Zammito (1996) in proposing "the hermeneutic process … moves the bricoleur to a more sophisticated level of meaning making (2001, p. 691).[25]

The kaleidoscope of understandings, relationships and connections identify this study as a work of methodological bricolage (Figure 2.2). The weaving together of image and text, symbol and sign, narrative and critique, participant and collaborator necessitated researcher engagement with the creative process of conceptual mapping; the weaver simultaneously working as design professional, DIY practitioner and research bricoleur.

Researcher as bricoleur

The research bricoleur is someone who "construct[s] theories by arranging and rearranging, by negotiating and renegotiating with a set of well-known materials … [using] a mastery of associations and interactions" (Turkle & Papert, 1992, p. 10). The iterative and insightful nature of bricolage methodology is well suited to researchers with a background in design practice, familiar with the need to be responsive, reflective and flexible in order to remain relevant (Schön, 1983):

> We *tinker* in the Levi-Straussian sense with our research methods in field-based and interpretive context. This tinkering is a high level cognitive process involving construction and reconstruction, contextual diagnosis, negotiation, and readjustment. Researchers' interaction with the objects of their inquiries, bricoleurs understand, are always complicated, mercurial, unpredictable and of course complex. (Kinchloe, 2005, p. 325, emphasis in the original)

[25] The study arrives at *meaning making* through the analysis and synthesis of data, chapter 5.

As design research embracing bricolage as a "set of interpretive practices" (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998, p. 5), multiple methods, strategies and models have complimented and facilitated the exploration (Figure 2.3). Unable to answer the research questions using a single method, both known and new techniques and models have been used in order to capture a more holistic understanding of human experience. The various components of this methodological jigsaw may appear at times ambiguous, however, the selection carries with it an appreciation of and respect for the heritage each method or model brings to the finished work (Grossberg, Nelson, & Treichler, 1992).

Auto-ethnographic stance

As bricoleur I consciously moved between my role as researcher collecting and analysing the experiences of others, and adopting an auto-ethnographic stance investigating my own lived experience. Applying auto-ethnography, interpreted as "insider ethnography" or "ethnography of one's own group" (Reed-Danahay, 1997, p. 2), facilitated alternative avenues of investigation and interpretation.

In order to gauge the authenticity of data as it was collected, my position in the study had to bridge personal, professional and academic experience, and identify overlaps with direct knowledge *of* and experience *with* many participants (Figure 2.4). Familiar with most participants and their homes over many years, maintaining sufficient distance to afford objectivity was difficult at times, especially when asked for design advice on problems being discussed during interviews. David Hayano refers to this involvement as being *a player,* based on his own study on poker players. Aiming to present an "insider's view … accomplished by prolonged immersion" (1982, p. 155), Hayano was clear on the distinction between auto ethnography, as "the study of one's own people or group … [and] autobiographical accounts presented as ethnographies of the self" (Wolcott, 1999, p. 173).

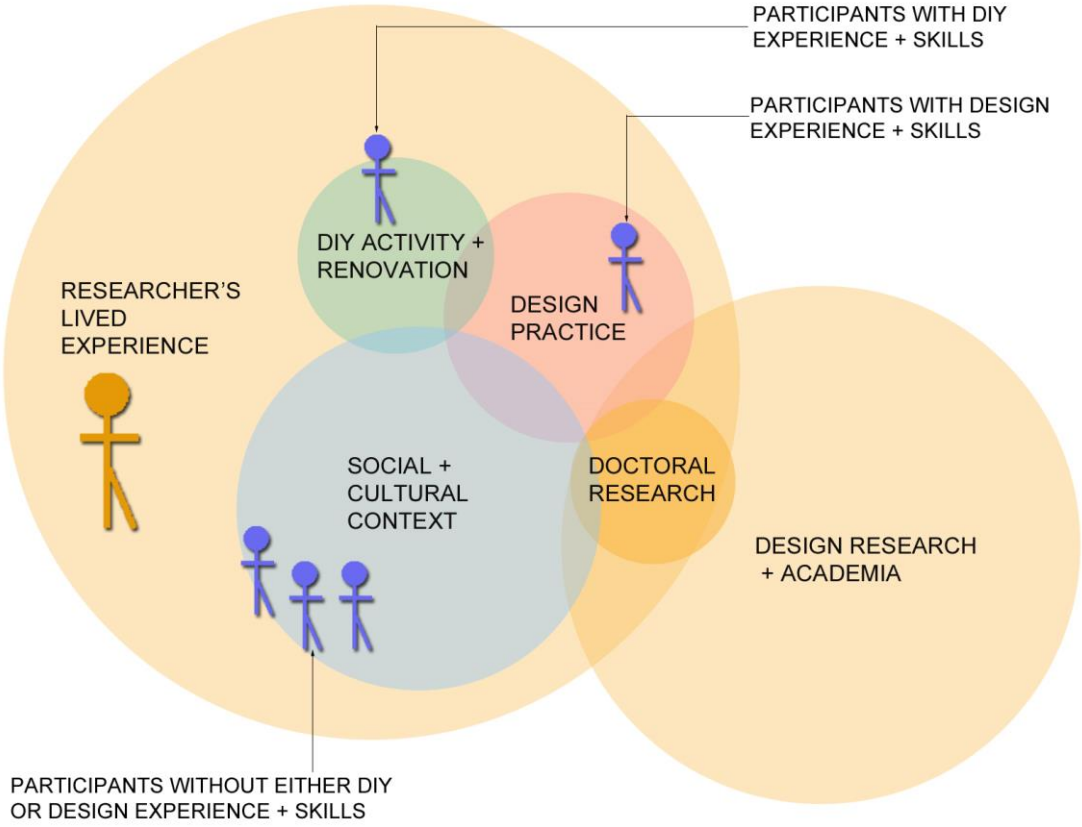


Figure 2.4: Participants and researcher located in relation to experience

Although Hayano's enthusiasm for intense familiarity with the participants and research context focused on the potential to *see* subtle connections that others/ outsiders might not, I was aware it "may yield issues of bias and oversight" (N. D. Smith, 2010, p. 7). As researcher, participant observer and practitioner in the case study, using the pseudonym Pollywaffle, my own prior knowledge of living *with* DIY and *with* design, provided an insider perspective, with the attendant opportunities and limitations:

> Insiders manage, manipulate, and negotiate meanings in particular situations, intentionally and unintentionally obscuring, hiding, or concealing these meanings further from the viewpoint of outsiders … participant observation focuses on the meanings of human existence as seen from the standpoint of insiders. (Jorgensen, 1989, p. 14)

Friends and family frequently prepared for interview events as they would social occasions; in those situations, the ethnographer in the room disappeared, acting

"only as a catalyst or facilitator" (Wolcott, 1999, p. 144), on other occasions, knowledge of a shared situation drew me in as a collaborator. It was necessary to emphasise the role of researcher with friends and family more than with strangers, who automatically accepted my role as investigator (Guba & Lincoln, 1981).

Having been present at the same social gatherings over the last decade, at the beginning of the study I became at once an *insider*[26] and *outsider*[27] (Jorgensen, 1989; Tedlock, 1991), was both at the center and on the margins of the *conversation space* (Figure 2.7).[28] Although I was cautious about the blurring of roles, Roger Keesing emphasises the importance of research that positions itself within the social networks:

> Far too little is known about the way friendship and informal partnerships in gardening, trade or other enterprises are woven into the fabric of every day social life.... With the organization of complex societies … one must pay attention to the ways individual bonds of friendship, economic strategy, and political alliance operate. (1971, p. 280)

Anthropologist Sherry Ortner also supports greater connectivity with interview subjects, commenting on the problematic *separation* of familiarity. Ortner advocates a more holistic method of capturing the research situation, taking a broader perspective on cultural context rather than projects based on a series of single interviews (1999). With this in mind, participants in this study were selected as a network of people known to each other, providing cross-referenced data and forming a collage of multiple voices, familiar places and shared memories.

Participant data revealed shared knowledge, emphasising relationships within a community of people and belongings. Engagement between participants, their homes and projects, and with the researcher over the course of research, led to many instances of collaborative practice.

[26] For example, as one of the social group.
[27] For example, as the interviewer guiding topic focus, documenting the process.
[28] In other words, moving between ethnography and auto-ethnography.

Ethnographic insight

Given the momentary nature of interviews, previous knowledge of participants' habitual ways of living can be invaluable; an ethnographic understanding of familiar personal dynamics informs:

> The beliefs, the values, the material conditions and structural forces that underwrite the socially patterned behaviours of all human beings and the meanings people attach to these conditions and forces. (Forsey, 2010, p. 567)

The close relations within a social network contributed strongly to the individual and collective understanding of lifestyle, the familiar sense of being *at home* in participant homes, and the shared enjoyment of DIY. The documentation of participant data generated from personal and observed experience emerged as an "enactment of hybridity … [moving between] worlds both personal and professional, whether in the field or at home" (Narayan, 1993, p. 681). Both researcher and participant worldviews are critical to interpretive study, just as designer and client worldviews bring alternate perspectives to the project briefing. Rather than considering ethnography a method exclusive to anthropological research,[29] it is also suited to investigating "authentic design situations" (Jonson, 2005, p. 614), and culturally situated practices such as DIY (G. Bell, Blythe, Gaver, Sengers, & Wright, 2003; Bolton & Seals, 2011).

Society functions in a state of continual transformation so even an accumulated understanding of individuals or family or groups must, by necessity, be both formed from retrospective knowledge and projected expectations. Usually, periodic time in the field means it is only possible to *partially* capture the complexity the cultural situation of any group (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). In this study, ethnographic insight, auto-ethnographic input, and four data methods of collection (section 2.3), gathered information on participants, places and practices, and created an interpretive bricolage; a collage of shared lives in the field.

[29] In terms of what is done and how it is done.

2.2 Participant selection

Purposeful selection methods[30] were used to identify participants for this study, aiming to gather data from a wide range of people within a social network that was connected *in some way* through DIY, reminiscent of Hayano's poker players (1982). The core group were identified through my knowledge of their DIY experience and association with each other, from the outset providing a direct connection between participants and researcher. Participants often suggested other individuals or couples they knew with experience in DIY, both good and bad, many of whom became part of the study.

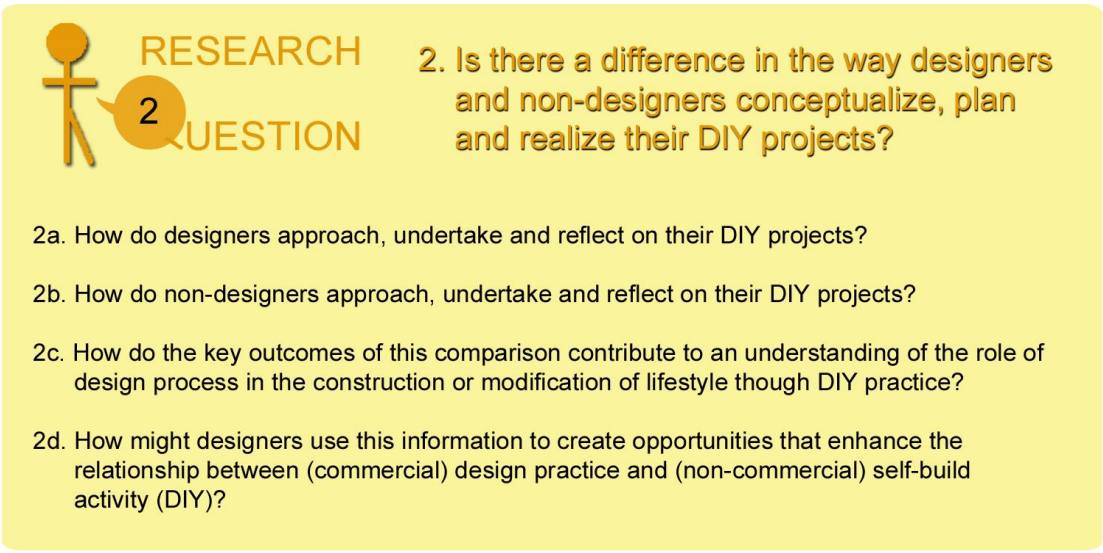


Figure 2.5: Research question 2 with sub-questions

Given the second research question focused on comparisons between designers and non-designers (Figure 2.5), a large enough cohort was required to ensure inclusion of people with a range of backgrounds.[31] Participants subsequently incorporated professional designers from different disciplines, as well as non-designers, plus people with a variety of DIY backgrounds, from "hire-renovators" (Peng, 2009, p. 6) who had engaged contractors to do the work, to novice and experienced self-builders. As a network of associated individuals and couples, many were found to be similar in terms of socio-economic, geographic and age factors, a

[30] To include both maximum variation and snowball sampling.
[31] For example, generally—gender, age, education, ethnicity, and specifically—skills and experience associated with DIY, design and home renovation.

pattern consciously disrupted with the inclusion of younger or older individuals, or people living overseas. Given that DIY occurs at all socio-economic levels and between generations it was not necessary to filter participants on that basis, it was more important to observe and interview participants with a spread of competence in both DIY and design and experience with home renovation.

Additionally, precedent studies, both in Australia and overseas, incorporated participants with a wider range of gender, class or age profiles, allowing for evaluation of *some* similar study data with a greater range of profile types. Comparison between the findings of precedent studies (refer section 2.3Aii) and the survey for this research, revealed patterns of behaviour *generally* shared by various respondent groups. The similarities show participants in this study share *some* opinions or preferences with the wider national population about ideals and taste, human qualities, culture, ambition and class, indicating these are issues not impacted significantly by the selection criteria for this research.

Participant identification

The total number of participants who completed the survey settled on forty, comprising an equal number of males and females. Participants were each given a code for documentation that enabled easy identification of gender and pair relations: a number for each individual or couple, a letter for gender.[32]

As well as administrative codes, the participants were given pseudonyms. The varied backgrounds and personalities of the participants resulted in a rich *palette* of contributors, both to the data collected and to the research bricolage framing an ever-changing picture of domestic life, a kaleidoscope of households in flux. Overlaying the colours and shades of individual experiences, were the textures and patterns of the wider influences on people's lives, shaping their lives as they also shape their own. Reflecting this rich palette, participant pseudonyms were chosen from paint charts used by one of the participants to record the frequency of

[32] For example, a participant couple identified as P 030a (female) and P 030b (male).

decorating events, noting the painting date and room by the colour used (Figure 4.45).

Mapping networks

The relationships between all participants were recorded as one of fourteen *attributes,* such as *immediate family* for parents, children and siblings; and *relatives* for aunts/uncles, nieces/nephews and first cousins. A series of *relational mapping studies* was developed to assist with later identification of patterns (Figure 2.6),[33] and revealed there were four types of connection that linked participants:

- Social - people who met socially
- Work - people acquainted through working together
- Family - people related to each other by blood or marriage
- Educational - people who became acquainted as students

Identifying the network of relations among the cohort facilitated investigation of the social and cultural aspects of DIY, specifically *how* people undertake the activity—alone or with others,[34] and whether the link between participants is of significance in their DIY experience(s). Additionally, recording the friend circles and family member groups allowed exploration of knowledge and skill transfer (Appendix 2), the exchange of *how to* information, ideas, tools, physical labour or even moral support, and sources of influence on home improvement decisions. At the outset, it was anticipated that the smaller the social distance, the greater the likelihood of identifying contributions of other participants/family/friends to the interpretation, construction and/or modification of lifestyle.

[33] Mapping studies included establishing patterns of DIY activity, DIY status and DIY retail visits, refer Appendix 1, 2 and 3. A relationship matrix was also developed.
[34] Vannini argues that all DIY activity is in fact carried out with others, 'do-it-with others' or 'DIW' although his definition includes non-human 'others' (2013a, p. 3).

MAPPING OF PARTICIPANTS

RELATIONS:

- DIRECTION OF SKILL TRANSFER
- SOCIAL LINK TO OTHER PARTICIPANT
- WORK LINK TO OTHER PARTICIPANT
- FAMILY LINK TO OTHER PARTICIPANT
- EDUCATIONAL LINK TO OTHER PARTICIPANT

PARTICIPANTS:

RESEARCHER FEMALE MALE

PARTICIPANT PROFILE DETAILS:
- code
  then attributes assigned:
- relation to researcher (refer key)
- age group
- design background (no design, some design, design)
- DIY background (nominal, basic, moderate, substantial)

RELATION TO RESEARCHER (KEY):
A. family (immediate)
B. relative
C. close friend
D 1. friend via work/past
D 2. friend via gym/sport/club
D 3. friend via education/university
D 4. friend via participant
E. acquaintance
F. other - introduced

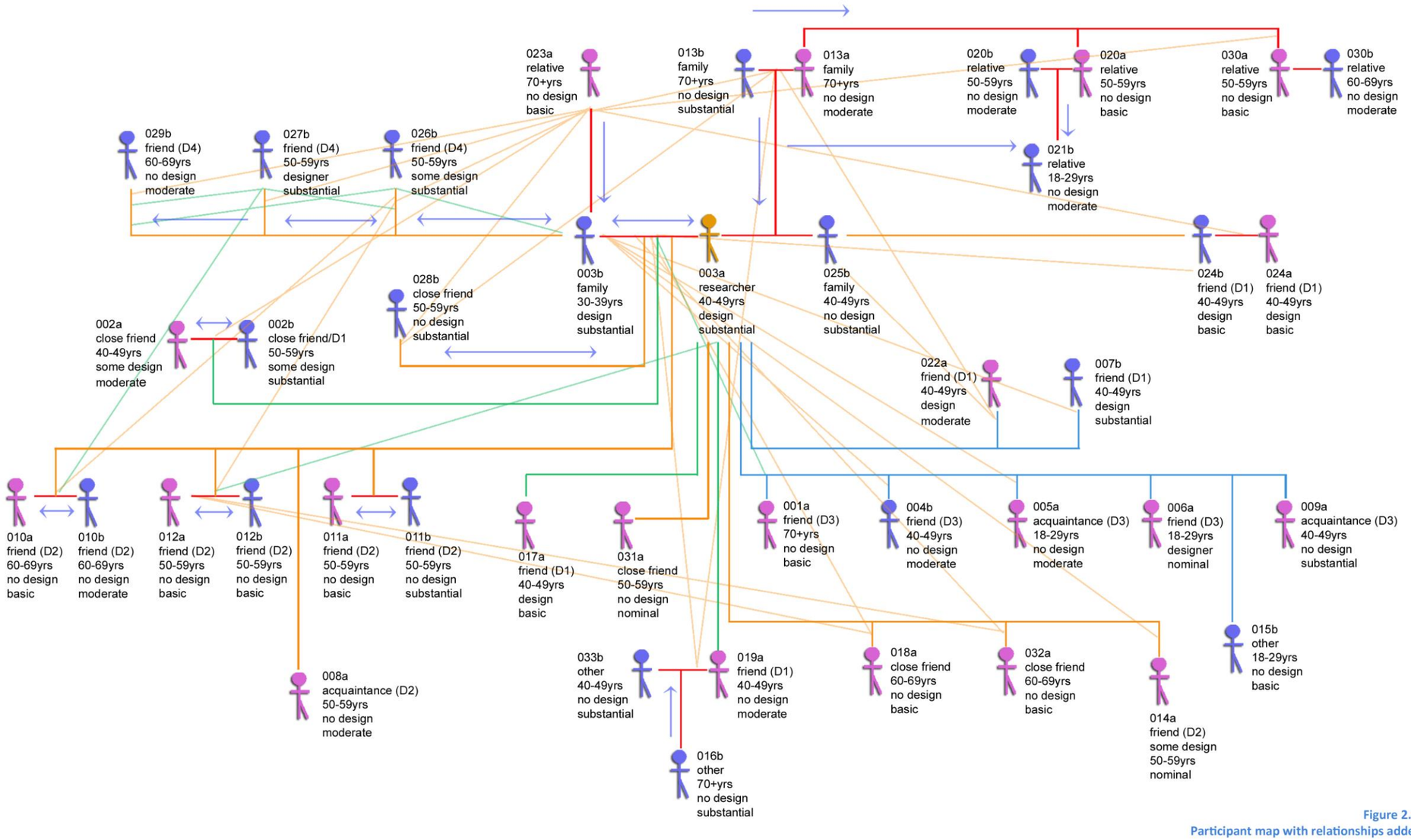


Figure 2.6:
Participant map with relationships added

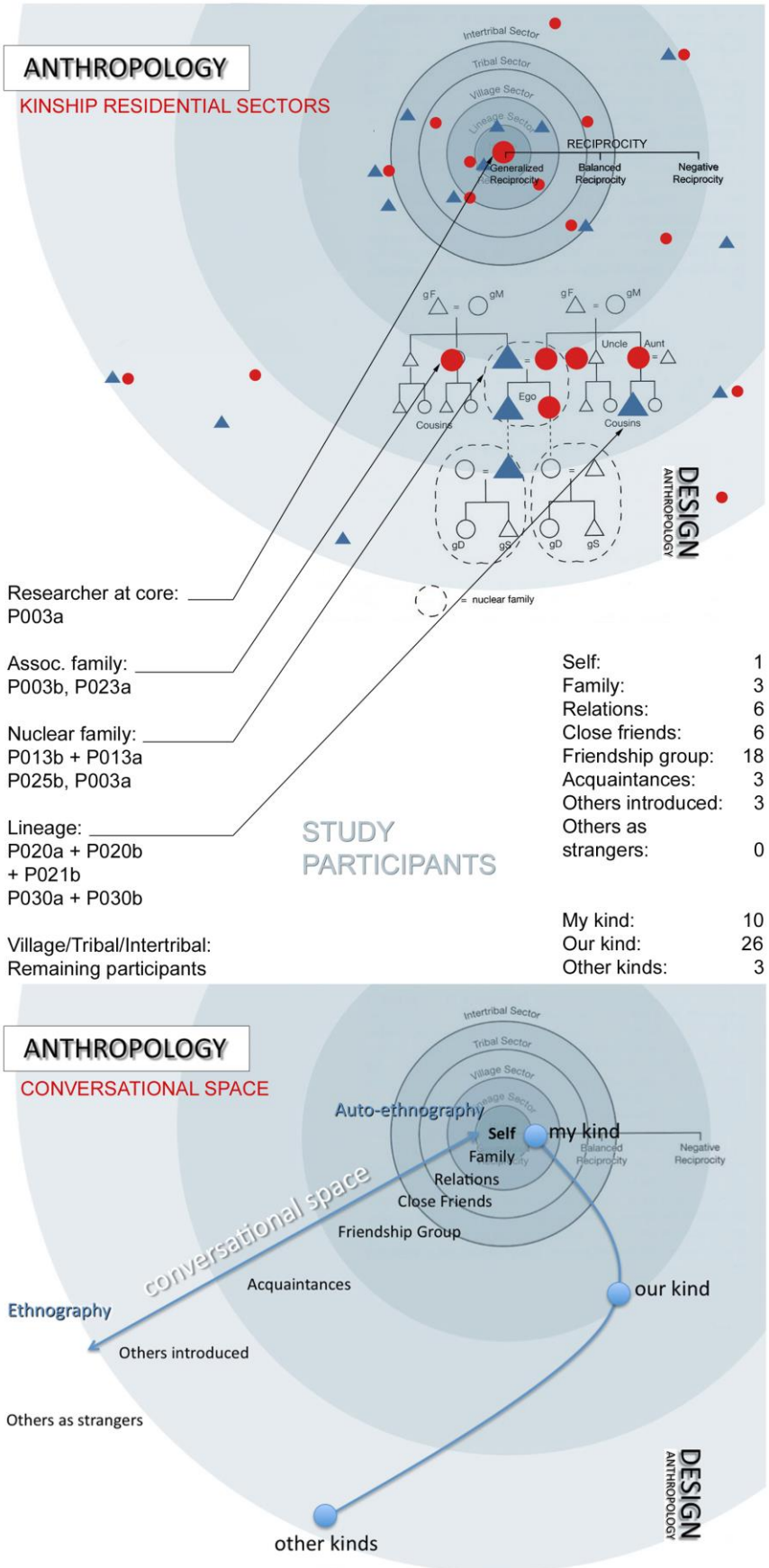


Figure 2.7: Kinship, kinds and conversational space

Anthropological notions of social distance after Marshall Sahlins' typology of reciprocity (1974), revealed the interlinked nature of the entire cohort, even with participants from beyond my immediate social circle. Figure 2.7[35] illustrates the *conversational space* that emerged between the participants, with each other and with me. Conversations during interviews were found to include more personal insights about motivations, influences, and experiences when they were between people with family connections or regular social contact. Ultimately, the conversational space filled with the exchange of information structured round narratives, reflections, recounted memories, and personal project documentation accumulated over time, including photographs, emails, spreadsheets, drawings and folders of hardware receipts.

2.3 Data collection

Once the study design and research landscape were broadly established, data collection methods were found weaving together as new connections in data emerged.[36] Searching *for* an outcome, whether "general principles … classes of problems … [or] new questions" (Friedman, 2002, p. 8), rather than working *towards* a pre-defined outcome, necessitated a flexible schedule and adjustment of methods prior to further exploration. Although the study was constantly evolving, there were four data collection methods used, *broadly* following the order outlined in Table 1.

Qualitative techniques for primary and empirical data collection were most appropriate for gathering participant perceptions of lifestyle and evidence on *how* DIY practitioners endeavor to shape their own ways of living with change. Beginning with the initial stage of inquiry ideation, data collection was found to be a multi-layered and iterative process (Figure 2.8), with the participant cohort remaining central to the exploration, frequently in diagrammatic form (Jonson, 2005).

[35] Adapted from: Sahlin's diagram, Figure 3.1 illustrating "reciprocity and kinship residential sectors", in 'An introduction to social anthropology' (Hendry, 2008, p. 66).
[36] Rather than a linear series of tasks as indicated by the layout of this section.

Table 1: Summary of data collection methods

Data collection method:	Aim:
A. Literature review (i) Research landscape (ii) Precedent studies (iii) Participant resource material	 Build preliminary understanding of: research landscape (including theoretical background), key topics (including creativity and transformation), concept of lifestyle, design process and DIY (specifically in relation to home renovation). Locate studies correlating most closely with this study, facilitating comparison of methods, findings or insights where applicable. Explore sources of influence (media/popular culture); interpretation of lifestyle related to consumption, DIY and design.
B. Survey Everyday Cultures and Lifestyle Survey (EC+LS)	 Personal details for participant cohort profile; media choices; social, cultural and political preferences, context for individual and group.
C. Interview Conversational interviews	 Personal perception of lifestyle; aspiration; media influence; reflection on lived experience with DIY, evidence of lifestyle transformation.
D. Case Study Study of DIY Projects	 Observation of participant projects for signs of accumulating experience; generation of situated cases; design process; creativity and transformation.
Refer Figure 2.8 for a diagrammatic representation of the data collection process.	

DATA COLLECTION PROCESS MAPPED:
PARTICIPANT COHORT LOCATED TO CENTRE

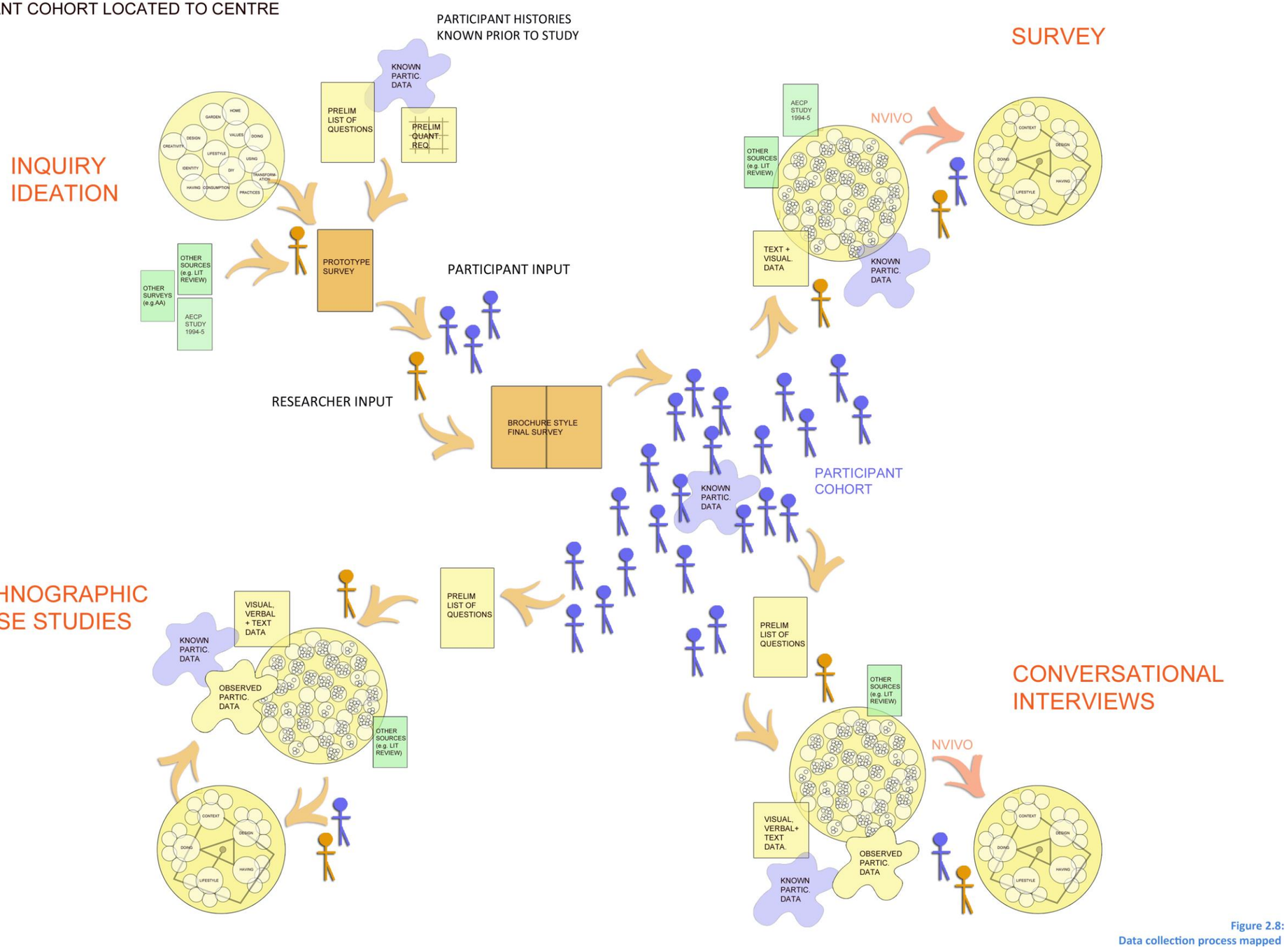


Figure 2.8:
Data collection process mapped

A. Literature review

The literature review was completed as a three-tiered process. Firstly, data from a broad interdisciplinary research landscape was filtered to establish relevant theoretical and topical information connecting fields, themes and threads. Secondly, a review of precedent studies facilitated the development of a survey and interview preparation and provided comparative responses. Thirdly, a review of participant resources generated material on the nature of media influence specific to the members of the cohort.

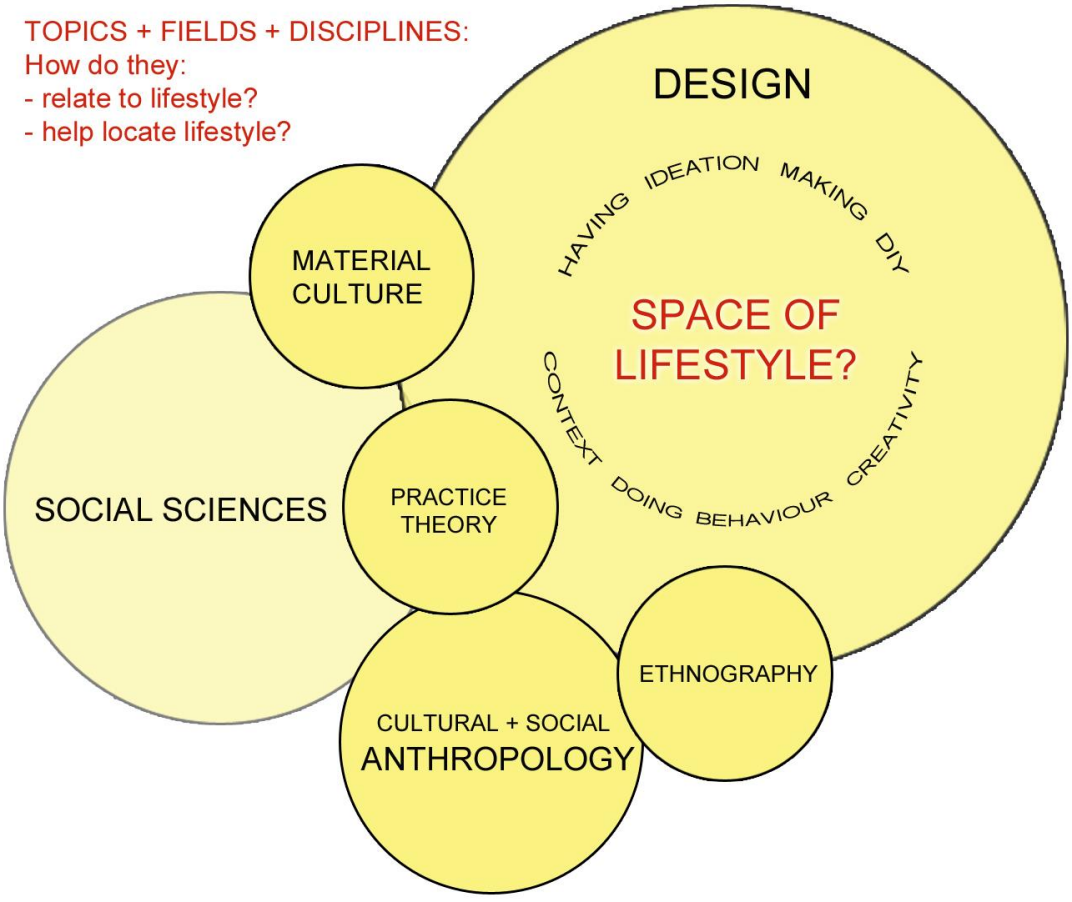


Figure 2.9: Conceptual mapping of fields linked with research questions

(i) Research landscape

Situated between design and the social sciences, this investigation drew heavily on design disciplines—specifically architecture, anthropology and approaches to

practice (Figure 2.9). Material culture theory and methods and consumption studies also contributed strongly to the review of literature on "values, ideas, attitudes and assumptions … [using] material or artifacts" as evidence and "objects as primary data" (Prown, 1982, p. 1). Although there were very few research investigations of direct relevance to the study methodology, the key *fields* determining the broad research landscape for this study were:

- design
- anthropology
- material culture + consumption (studies)
- practice theory/theories on practice, and
- bricolage methodology

More relevant material included critical literature reviews and theoretical investigations on making and creativity, identity and domestic space and patterns of domestic consumption. Thus, the key *themes* facilitating the investigation of research questions were:

- home (as site of renovation)
- transformation
- creativity
- bricolage

A substantial body of literature on the meaning of home and materiality on discussions of the value of artefacts in our everyday lives, and as such provide information feeding into the above *themes* (Campbell, 2005; Csikszentmihalyi & Rochberg-Halton, 1981; Dant, 1999; De Jong, 2007; Hurdley, 2006; McCracken, 1988).

Literature on consumption in the home as a *primary site of practice* relevant to the practice of DIY and creation of lifestyle also informed this study. These included

Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi's 'The Meaning of Things: Domestic symbols and the self' (1981); Ruth Madigan and Moira Monro's 'House beautiful: Style and consumption in the home' (1996), and Daniel Miller's 'Home possessions: Material culture behind closed doors'. Miller's text explores the "active participation of the home and its material culture in the construction of our lives" (2001, p. 3), and in doing so, provides insights on consumption practices contributing to the active management and curation of lifestyle in the home environment.

Providing greater focus on the investigation concept, the five key *threads* were explored through literature on:

- context – media and popular culture influences on home renovation
- having – human motivations influencing renovating behaviour
- doing – DIY as a 'serious leisure' activity modifying home
- design – practice-oriented process, specifically architecture
- lifestyle – way(s) of living

Studies addressing behaviour and activities, not simply as things that people do, but as complex and co-ordinated arrangements of actions, contributed to the body of literature consulted most closely in developing this study and the key *threads* (de Certeau, 1984; Partington, 2008; Schuler & Namioka, 1993). The focus varied from the influence of *practice(s) on things*, to the actual and potential influence of objects such as materials and tools *on practice(s)* (Bourdieu, 1989b; Featherstone, 1991; Giddens, 1991; Reckwitz, 2002; Turner, 1987).

Shove, by contending that practices rather than objects are "the fundamental unit of social existence" (Shove, 2007, p. 12), contributed another avenue of theoretical inquiry about the nature of human action in the world (Hurdley, 2006). The involvement of participants as practitioners, with their conceptions, capability and

motivations, and the significance of the mode or method of practice, such as on a DIY basis, were found to be of core relevance to the study. [37]

(ii) Precedent studies

To date there has been little survey data on DIY activity, culture and consumption or lifestyle, particularly in relation to issues of close relevance to this study. Further, most of the studies that are available, particularly on DIY, are from market oriented sources, with few academic investigations and fewer still addressing data sourced in Australia.

Table 2: Summary of main precedent studies

Abbreviation used:	Study title:	Main publication(s):	Author(s):
PAHR	A pluralistic analysis of housing renovation choices in Brisbane (2006-7) *University of Queensland*	PhD Thesis, 2009	T.-C. Peng
AECP	The Australian Everyday Culture Project (1994-5) *ARC funded research*	'Accounting for Tastes' (book) 1999	T. Bennet, M. Emmison and J. Frow
CCP	Cultures of Consumption Project (2002-7) *ESRC/AHRC funded research projects (26no.)*	Published via website	E. Shove, A. Warde, T.W. Chan, P. Higgs, et al.

Precedent studies on home renovation or DIY

PAHR includes statistical analysis of survey data gathered in 2006/7, from the "perspective of mainstream economics" (Peng, 2009, p. iv). The doctoral inquiry acknowledges "relevant micro-data regarding individuals' choices and their social and psychological attitudes towards renovation are in short supply" (ibid.), and provides observations regarding non-economic decision relevant to this research. Two of the PAHR study questions were used directly in survey for this research, EC+LS, and seven influenced similar questions, allowing for comparisons to be made

[37] Refer Appendix 4 for a summary of key contributors.

with the PAHR greater sample sizes (366 respondents) on questions related to the home, renovation and to DIY practice.

Other surveys consulted allowed for some comparison of DIY oriented findings, including 'Tea and DIY', a British survey carried out for the Social Issues Research Centre (Marsh, 1998), and 'Handyman Skills', carried out in the Britain in 2010 by a PR company on behalf of the Automobile Association. Consultation of British survey material was both necessary, given the scarcity of relevant studies carried out in Australia, and meaningful given many of the participants were born and grew up in Britain. According to the authors of 'The Australian space of lifestyles in comparative perspective', "British and Australian cultural fields are still closely connected through language, cultural and media networks, and relations of historical affiliation" (Bennett, Bustamante, & Frow, 2013, p. 225).

Precedent studies on culture and consumption

Several sections of the EC+LS were heavily influenced by a national survey developed for the AECP study carried out in 1994-5 and involving 2,756 respondents from across Australia (Emmison, 1997; Woodward, 2003, 2011). Project findings[38] were published in 'Accounting for Tastes', which claims to be; "the most systematic and substantial study of Australian cultural tastes, preferences and activities ever published" (Bennett et al., 1999, p. i). Notably, the AECP findings reflect on the cultural and theoretical context of responses, extending the "disembodied" statistics from national surveys[39] through investigating, for the first time: "The *relationships* between patterns of participation in the different fields of cultural practice" (Bennett et al., 1999, p. 2, emphasis in the original).

Again, relevant overlaps in subject matter enabled selective comparison[40] of responses from both surveys while recognising the variables; the fifteen-year gap,[41]

[38] Select findings were referenced in a number of publications by Bennett, Emmison and Woodward, and via the Social Science Archive of ANU however, not all findings were available in original form.
[39] Such as Australian Bureau of Statistics data.
[40] However, direct comparison of findings without qualification would be misleading.

the difference in cohort size, and a selective sample versus a random sample. The AECP similarities situated my participants in a more generalised national framework of "cultural practices and preferences" (Bennett et al., 1999, p. 1), however, differences included the average age, the geographical distribution, and even the socio-economic background of participants (Table 3). Regardless, the AECP survey findings provide an important backdrop against which the mapping of practices in this study may be presented.

Table 3: Survey structure comparisons

Survey: Categories:	AECP	EC+LS
Data gathering	1994-5	2009-2010
Respondents	2756	40
Sampling procedure	Stratified random sample	Selective, by snowball or referral
Respondent location	Australia (Nationally representative)	Australia, UK, HK (Selective, international)
Average age	39.23yrs	52.91yrs
Gender percentage - Male:female	51:47.6 (1.4 uncodeable)	50:50

Another valuable source of cultural insight included the CCP study, investigating consumption on a global basis. Other than these two studies, the majority of information relating to the Australian context appeared to originate from market research consultancies with undisclosed methodologies or sample sizes.

Precedent studies on lifestyle

Although the AECP survey assist in building a picture of lifestyle in Australia, the only Australian survey found to directly reference the term *lifestyle* was titled 'Lifestyle Trends Survey', carried out by KPMG Property & Demographic Advisory in 2011. The survey was unavailable and the published report omitted direct questions on income in favor of questions revealing prioritisation of spending and personal issues, a decision that was also taken for this study.

[41] People in the original AECP cohort groups (18-24yrs, 45-49yrs and 68-80yrs) would now be 33-39yrs, 60-64yrs and 83-95yrs respectively, a similar age to the EC+LS survey participants. This is tentative but provides a generational link between respondents of both surveys.

In summary, a small selection of precedent studies assisted the generation of study specific data (via EC+LS), enabled reflection on similar issues even where differently collected and interpreted data, and facilitated "validity, reliability, and replicability [that] meet[s] minimum standards" (Hancke, 2009, p. 92) using comparable data. The AECP data was collected for a specific goal, in a national context and using statistical analysis techniques that differ from the study survey, and therefore the findings for similar questions cannot corroborate or disprove the AECP findings. Rather, the various precedents have been used to build a contextualised picture of shared issues, a collage of cultural practices as the backdrop to the core focus of this study; the construction of lifestyle through having, design and DIY in the domestic sphere.

Figure 2.10: The post-war household; families 'making' home through DIY and doing-it-together

(iii) Participant resource material

A wide range of popular culture literature and graphic material was collected over the duration of the study in order to evaluate the influence of media on the participants. The available material ranged from historical information on interior decoration, domestic construction and DIY from the early 1900s,[42] to current publications on architecture and interior design (Figure 2.10[43]). The majority was linked directly with the participants, either provided in hard copy of their own volition, or referenced in interviews or through surveys. The remainder was already in my possession at the commencement of the research, and as a participant in the study (Pollywaffle), also represents material filtered by participant preference (for sample refer Appendix 7).

B. Survey

A survey was designed as the first stage of direct enquiry to gather a broad foundation of basic information about issues relating to everyday ways of living as experienced by a varied but representative group of people. The survey for this study, EC+LS, was designed to gather both qualitative and quantitative information common to all participants and therefore available for comparison and/or cluster analysis. It was also used to identify issues for clarification relating to the threads (Appendix 8), and further exploration during follow-up interviews.

Survey pilot + distribution

A prototype or pilot survey was given to six people—three male, three female, including one couple while I was present to answer any queries. The final version was distributed to thirty-six people, with equal numbers male and female, some being couples, to interstate and overseas locations as well as local. Accounting for two surveys were temporarily lost in the post, forty completed surveys were received.

[42] The Museum of Domestic Design & Architecture (MODA), Middlesex, University has been a valuable source of historical material illustrating the beginning of DIY as a leisure activity. Reference has been made to the development of DIY as a popular practice in the post-war era, however, a detailed review of historical literature on DIY was beyond the scope of this thesis.
[43] Source: 'The Practical Householder' (1956, 1957-postcard), courtesy of Museum of Domestic Design & Architecture (MODA), Middlesex University 2012.

Survey design

The final survey contained 79 questions—tick box options with some written response areas aimed at gathering insights on *lifestyle.* Two blank pages provided space for sketch layouts of the childhood home and current home, partly exploring the participant's familiarity with plan diagrams typical in real estate and house build advertisements,[44] and partly to compare recollection of childhood and adult homes.[45]

Respondent feedback

Some participants had help with the survey, mostly their partner, often also a participant; response pairs reveal the idiosyncrasies of social groups embraced as part of the data. Even at this first stage of direct data collection, the participants were seen to be collaborators in generating the information.

Data coding

The individual responses for all forty original surveys were classified using software, with fourteen *attributes* assigned to each participant's coded identity and used for filtering data.[46]

C. Interviews

The interview stage aimed to expand on survey responses, collect narratives on renovation experience and identify possible projects for the case study.

Sample selection

[44] Essentially understanding the relation between two-dimensional diagrammatic representation and three-dimensional space. Comprehension of plans is discussed in section 3.3.
[45] Reflection on past and current experiences of home are discussed in section 3.4, with examples provided in Figure 4.54.
[46] Using qualitative data analysis computer software, Nvivo by QSR International. The most notable attributes relate to participant DIY and design backgrounds. For survey data located to study, refer Appendix 8.

Ultimately, over three-quarters of the respondents took part in an initial interview about their home improvement experience(s), some with further interviews, and others notified me by email of any progress made on home projects, often including progress photographs, and thus remaining as engaged participants until the end of the study.

With experiences ranging from decorating to renewing bathrooms/kitchens, re-styling gardens, and renovating entire apartments/houses, a wide range of narratives were collected. Some participants were found to have no direct *hands on* experience of DIY; rather they provided support roles in DIY projects undertaken by their partners, but subsequently took part-ownership over the work when describing what was done. A number of participants interviewed were *hire renovators*, engaging contractors to do licensed work or physically challenging projects, such as installing kitchens (Peng, 2009). These people also frequently took ownership over the work, referring to it as a renovation they had *done*.

Interview design

Interviews were conducted as open, informal conversations, usually in participant's home, allowing the participants to describe their DIY involvement for former and current projects through a flexible and open-ended inquiry, "search[ing] for contextual meanings, for situation-explicit and value-resonant grounding" (Guba & Lincoln, 1981, pp. 165-6).

The interviews intended to foreground consumption and acquisition (*having*) in relation to actual and anticipated DIY projects, and to explore accounts of DIY practice (participation, *doing*). Being literally *at home* with participants allowed direct observation of DIY artefacts, including the contents of tool sheds, garages and stored materials, contributing, amongst other things, to an understanding of consumption related to past, current and future projects.[47] Although not asked to evaluate or rationalise the decisions made relating to DIY projects, reasons for

[47] DIY as a form of craft-consumption is discussed in section 3.5.

making choices were often volunteered by participants. The narratives or conversations about experience(s) were to be interpreted within the context presented by the participant (Kvale, 1983).

The group interviews frequently became a social occasion, extending before and well beyond the period recorded by audio equipment. Discussions jumped to other topics, many unrelated to the study focus although it could be argued that wider issues of home life contribute to the contextual boundaries of lifestyle as a *way of living*. Main aims included locating instances of transformation, investigating how participants planned to achieve of lifestyle-oriented goals through home modification, and exploring the main creative (or design-based) thought processes involved in identifying and solving problems arising during the course of tasks.

Interview events

There were a total of forty-one interview *events*, all of which were conducted in person regardless of location/country; thirty-two participants engaged in conversation on single or multiple occasions, mostly as individuals but sometimes as a couple, or group. The majority of events lasted between sixty and ninety minutes and were one-on-one. The longest interviews tended to be those conducted with couples, the shortest interviews with individuals not previously known to the researcher but introduced by others.

Given the difficulty of identifying boundaries for *lifestyle*, the dialogue was allowed to develop without being overly restrictive on time or topic. In this way, meanings and values developed organically as people's priorities and shared understandings came to light (Wisker, 2001). With some group events responses were formed around a consensus of opinion, and individual viewpoints expressed were often tailored to engage the wider audience rather than answer issues raised. According to Derek Phillips, "purposeful distortion occurs … as the respondent attempts to adhere to one or another (sometimes contrary) set of social norms and expectations" (1972, p. 104).

Interviewing couples on a subject shared, *their* home and *their* lifestyle, rather than interviewing them separately, adds complexity to the interpretation. Does one member of a couple speak for both of them when they answer as *we*? When the subject of inquiry is a joint activity where, say, the involvement or effort is

SELECTED INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS AND CONTRIBUTION TO THREAD DEVELOPMENT

Participants in matrix - a representative sample of cohort with a range of backgrounds - are the main contributors to chapter 4 with minor mentions also of P004b, P011a+b, P027b and P016b.

INTERVIEWER:

PARTICIPANTS: MALE FEMALE	INDIVIDUALS:						COUPLES: (Note 1)				
	P007b	P026b	P028b	P009a	P001a	P019a	P002a+b	P010a+b	P003a+b	P012a+b	P024a+b
AGE GROUP:	40-49yrs	50-59yrs	50-59yrs	40-49yrs	70+yrs	40-49yrs	a. 40-49yrs b. 50-59yrs	60-69yrs	a.40-49yrs b.30-39yrs	50-59yrs	40-49yrs
DIY BACKGROUND: 1. Nominal 2. Basic 3. Moderate 4. Substantial	4	4	4	4	2	3	3 4	2 3	4 4	2 4	2 2
DESIGN BACKGROUND: A. Professional B. Some design education C. No training	A	B	C	C	C	C	B B	C C	A A	C C	A A
THREAD: Context (Section 4.3)	●				●				◑		◑
THREAD: Having (Section 4.4)	●		●		●		◑	◑	◑	◑	
THREAD: Doing (Section 4.5)	●	●			●	●			◑		
THREAD: Design (Section 4.6)	●	●			●				◑		◑
THREAD: Lifestyle (Section 4.2)	●	●		●	●	●	◑	◑	◑	◑	
	Note 2				Note 2		Note 1		Note 2	Note 1	

Matrix key (example): Participants both have a basic DIY background, both have professional design training and, as a couple,have been included in the thread sections context and design.

Note 1: Some of the interviews came closer to the focus group method of inquiry with four people having a semi-structured conversation in a social setting. The interviewer was joined on several occasions by participant P003b, who has known the interviewees for the same period as the interviewer.
Note 2: Case study participants contributed throughout chapter 4.

Figure 2.11:
Profile matrix for selected interview participants

differentially distributed,[48] but the outcome jointly beneficial, such as renovation, can one person's response about the experience be taken as the answer for both? Logically not, however, where the other member of the couple agrees without correcting, are we right in assuming this is a truly shared opinion about a lived experience they variously shared?

A small selection of interview material was identified for discussion in the thesis, exemplifying the range of relationships people have with the key study topics and threads. The matrix in Figure 2.11 summarises the cross-section of DIY and design backgrounds included in the sample group, and the contribution made by topics of discussion to the five threads—*having, doing, design*, *context* and *lifestyle*.

Data coding

All interview events were recorded on audio equipment, with thirty-four transcribed and coded. The criteria for transcription included conversations that enabled me to:

- document the widest range of participant narratives for analysis,
- extend the personal, familial, social and historical context informing responses to key survey questions, and
- explore key topics (competence, skills and expertise) in relation to specific lived experiences with home renovation.

Rather than establishing the transcript as a single source for analysis, the *process* of transcribing—often many months after the interview, allowed me to enter "into a *dialogue* with the text, going into an imagined conversation with the 'author' about the meaning of the text" (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, p. 192, emphasis in the original). This enabled me to re-engage with the conversation after further readings and interviews generated a shift in knowledge or understanding.

[48] Such as the division of labour within DIY projects, identified during coding as an attribute.

D. Case study

A case study investigated home improvement activity in different *real-life* contexts; the individual studies were ethnographic snapshots of participant lives undergoing transformation while engaging with DIY activities (Figure 2.14). The addition of a case study enabled better triangulation of the predominantly interpretive data around a multi-faceted research inquiry concept.

The case study built on the collage of primary and secondary data already accumulated; adding another layer as information came *to hand,* bricolage style, constructing a dynamic picture of participant lives undergoing change. Being present during project work provided the opportunity to discuss, observe and reflect on the interpretation of three participants living in their homes as building sites. Some of the issues introduced through the survey (as text) or interview (verbal accounts) were m*ade visible* through observations of participants negotiating with resources, skills and competence while trying to realise their ideas.

Development of the case

The aim of the case study was to investigate the extent to which the issues currently identified in relation to the main threads, especially *design* and *lifestyle*, surfaced as a result of *doing*, the DIY process of specific change-making activities. It allowed for a comparison of *lived experiences* at different stages of a home improvement project (van Manen, 1990), to learn *how* the improved fabric of homes and/or gardens have had an impact on the lifestyles of the inhabitants and the everyday practice(s) of living (Ranjan, 2008):

- *prior* to an improvement project (recollecting the known and wished for),
- *during* (discovering the unknown, period of self-exploration), and
- *after* the completion (establishing self knowledge and revising the known).

Data was obtained from longitudinally mapped observations of social and physical activity generated during the course of home modification, recording life at home

during the (often disruptive) process of *transformation.*[49] Observations were supplemented with staged interviews and project diaries to ascertain the extent of creative processes and organisational mechanisms at work. As indicated by Hurdley, relying on narrative accounts alone is insufficient to record the *pluri-sensory* character of the home; multiple approaches to the fieldwork were thus required (2006).

Case study design

Four key principles were adhered to as essential parts of the inquiry, importantly maintaining objective distance from the data while being involved in the case study as a participant observer (Yin, 1984):

- acknowledging evidence in its entirety,
- addressing alternative interpretations,
- addressing the most significant aspects of case, and
- using own prior, expert knowledge.

Although the case study method has drawbacks in terms of applying generalisations to the findings, it exemplified the specific nature of the relationship under investigation. To plan an effective exercise in the time available, the following decisions were made (Stake, 1995):

- The single case would consist of multiple real life participant DIY project studies.
- Selected project studies would provide a range of differing levels of design and DIY competence.
- The time period would be delineated by participants' project tasks extending between six and twelve months to capture involvement and evidence of change—with the exception of investigation at researcher's home, which would be a ongoing study.

[49] See, for example, the project timeline diagrams: Figures 4.60, 4.61 and 4.62.

- Data would be collected using multiple methods: survey, interviews, observational site visit(s), and participant documentation including project diaries, photographs, emails, and ideation material.
- Subsequent data analysis would follow a cross-comparative procedure looking for patterns of inclusion or exclusion, conflict and corroboration across the projects.

Table 4: Intended DIY project categories

Project category	Approximate period	Range of complexity with example
Short-term	weekend to 1 month	Reasonably simple projects changing and arranging decorative finishes and fixtures. Some disruption or inconvenience to normal day-to-day activity in house Example projects: Decorating a room, basic garden alterations, changing use of a room (such as setting up a home office), moving into new home (arranging furniture, hanging rails, shelves, etc).
Medium-term	1 – 6 months	More complex projects that involve making alterations to part of house, and more significant fixtures, may also include surface decoration. More intrusive disruption to day-to-day activity in house/garden. Example projects: One room renovation (bathroom, kitchen – cabinets, tiling, sinks, etc), more major garden alterations (building timber deck with steps, or pergola with paving, courtyard with paving and fountain).
Long term	6+ months	Complex projects that generate major change to fabric of house and/or garden. Major disruption to way of living on day-to-day basis, may involve moving out. Example projects: Renovating several rooms, or whole house. Major renovation to exterior spaces, with multiple garden areas and structures.

Once the research started, it was clear that the boundaries of DIY projects, by time or task, were ill defined, and projects would not fit with the original criteria in the research period (Table 4). Only three participants were engaging in DIY activity with sufficient intensity or consistency for investigation. The projects under way were at varying stages of completion, varying levels of complexity, and generally of insufficient detail to be case studies in their own right (Simon, 1979).

Table 5: Planned and actual case study project details

Project category	Planned - minimum range of participant types	Actual - project category/ participant types
Short-term project	1 designer	1 designer, substantial DIY experience (P003b - Jasper) *Project:* *various – see multiple projects*
	1 non-designer	1 non-designer, basic DIY experience/novice (P001a - Lotus) *Project:* *Decorating 2 rooms*
Medium-term project	1 designer	1 designer, substantial DIY experience (P003b - Jasper) *Project:* *various – see multiple projects*
	1 non-designer	1 non-designer, basic DIY experience/novice (P001a - Lotus) *Project:* *Partial garden re-design*
Long-term project	1 designer	1 designer, substantial DIY experience (P007b - Fleetwood) *Project:* *Complete house renovation - ongoing before and after research period*
	1 non-designer	(none available)
Multiple projects/ continuous DIY *(DIY as lifestyle)*	(not part of original plan)	1 designer, substantial DIY experience (P003b - Jasper) *Projects:* *Ongoing renovation/DIY – house and garden, residential projects both past and present documented. Much work completed with partner (P003a – Pollywaffle) of same DIY and design background.*

The DIY projects underway were, however, sufficient for a cross-comparative case study. Each project category was still represented, plus an additional category emerged from one household with *multiple projects* under continual change (Table 5). My own home materialized as a site of continual turbulence generating a significant amount of data on DIY projects, supplementing participant feedback with direct real time experience and observation. Although not originally involved as a participant, the inclusion of my partner, Jasper, drew me into the study as his DIY co-worker. Having round the clock access to and immersion in the design, deliberation, specification and construction of a real-life project and in real-time was invaluable for this research as a dynamic, visceral, multi-sensory resource.

Selected projects + participants

The three participants, one female—Lotus, two male—Jasper and Fleetwood, each provided valuable and varied situations for investigation and through their close liaison became collaborators in this study (Table 5).[50] The case includes representation from each DIY and design background, the latter including designers with different specialist knowledge (Figure 2.11). The participants volunteered information, photographs and updates on their project without prompting, especially Jasper who was familiar with the research proposal.

Lotus (P001a)

The first participant, novice DIYer and non-designer, had plans for a short decorating task, and slightly longer garden redesign. The tasks had to fit in around her doctoral study and family commitments, thus a relatively short-term project extended over eleven months. Jasper and Pollywaffle were drawn into Lotus's project, as designers and friends, when she required advice and practical help, thus collaborating in her project.

[50] All participants had direct links with the researcher, two as university colleagues, one as partner.

Fleetwood (P007b)

A second participant, an architect and experienced DIYer was mid-way through the process of a full home renovation at the beginning of the study. I visited the home under change on a number of occasions over a period of twelve months.

Jasper (P003b)

The third participant, an urban designer and experienced *career DIYer,*[51] became a key collaborator in the study, providing feedback, prompting documentation of tasks and events and providing an alternative interpretations on data gathered. Jasper was observed working on multiple smaller projects forming part of ongoing home improvement.

Pollywaffle (P003a)

I found myself drawn inextricably into the field of study, and into the frame of inquiry. As Jasper's partner, *his* renovation work was *our* weekend activity, and *his* DIY site is *our* home. For the purpose of contributing to the case study in support of Jasper and Lotus, I have adopted a third party persona under the pseudonym Pollywaffle.

Cross-comparative data

As data emerged it was filtered and documented through a variety of "analytic manipulations" (Miles & Huberman, 1994). A series of different mapping diagrams and matrices were created with variables identified by participant backgrounds in design and DIY, the scale and method of work, variety in tools, tasks, and timescales (Figure 2.12).

The survey data collected from Lotus, Fleetwood and Jasper was compared, and as a group their responses were reviewed against the cohort, providing a good cross-section of profiles from which to build the case study. The selection of projects

[51] According to Stebbings, serious leisure is defined by six distinguishing qualities of which one is "finding a leisure *career* in the endeavour … [dependant on] significant personal *effort* using … specially acquired *knowledge*, *training*, *experience* or *skill*, and, indeed at times, all four" (2007, p. 11, emphasis in the original).

added validity to the cross comparative process. Similarities and differences between the case participants and their projects, include:

(i) Lotus and Fleetwood offered contrasting perspectives by virtue of their age group, gender, design and DIY backgrounds.

(ii) Lotus and Fleetwood tackled their projects mostly single-handed, although input from others was documented. Both projects were vastly different in scale, scope of works and timescale.

(iii) Fleetwood (an architect) and Jasper (an urban designer) both had a similar level of professional experience but different specialisms.

(iv) Fleetwood, Jasper and Pollywaffle, were all formally design-trained participants and self-taught builders, however, there were significant differences in accumulated skills and range of experience, both influenced by tool use, materials and scale of projects.

(v) Jasper and Pollywaffle were a domestic team who engage in DIY together,[52] whereas Fleetwood and Lotus relied on assistance from others not living in the building site.

(vi) Both genders are represented in the design and non-design, experienced DIY and novice DIY backgrounds.[53] Acknowledging an implied gender bias to some building tasks,[54] DIY home improvement activity accords with the DIY ethic, an ethic cultivating self-reliance and self-sufficiency and something feminists have strongly identified with as it promotes the idea that those tasks are not gender specific (Levine & Heimerl, 2008).

[52] A couple with the same design and DIY backgrounds, Pollywaffle and Jasper worked continually on improvement projects around the home, providing examples of successive and overlapping smaller projects, and insights on shared practices and careers with home renovation.
[53] Pollywaffle fits within the same DIY and design background categories as Jasper and Fleetwood, yet differs in gender and has tackled crafts requiring different types of skill and dexterity that have been traditionally the realm of females – such as needlework and upholstery. Here, she relates closely to Lotus who is similarly creative with the same type of craft projects.
[54] For example, tasks that require considerable strength, such as operating heavy equipment (e.g. concrete saw), or pushing a wheelbarrow full of concrete.

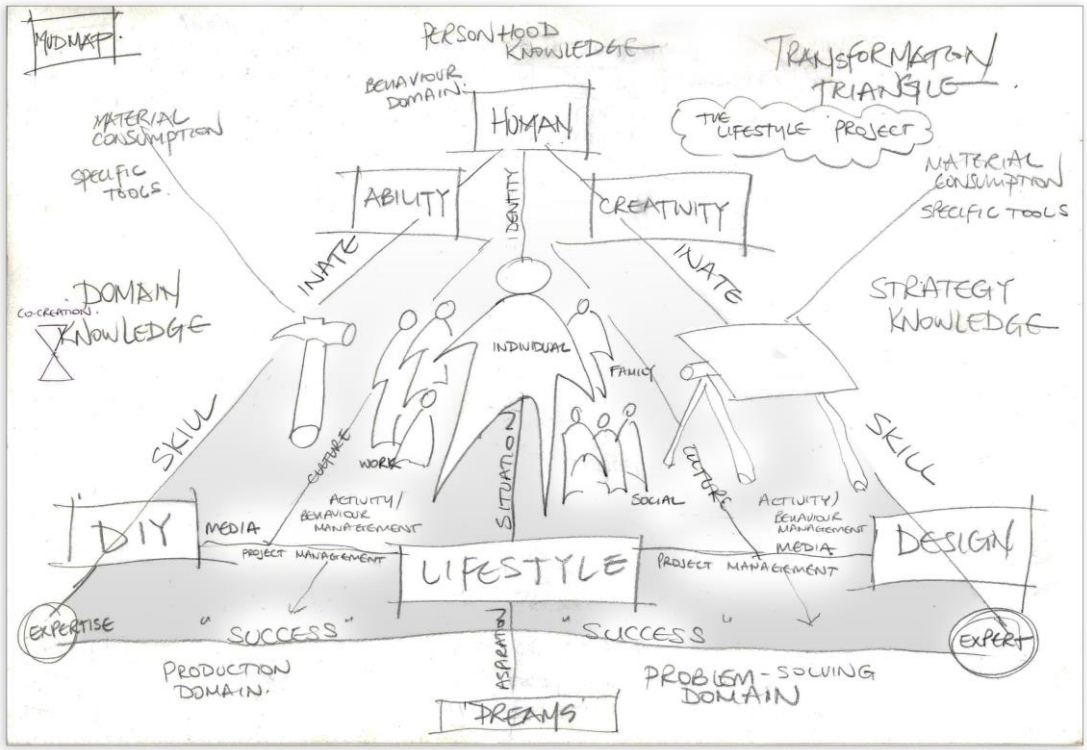


Figure 2.12: Case study analysis – example of preliminary mapping diagram

2.4 Data/inquiry analysis

A number of tools were used for the analysis of collected data. A thematic analysis framework focused mainly on locating the activities of *design*, *doing* and *having* in relation to other domains and influences (Gray & Malins, 2004). The thematic *network* produced helped to consolidate analysis and accommodate an emergent interpretation of key themes.

Analysis tools

(i) Visual techniques

Visual techniques including diagramming, tabulation, matrices, mapping diagrams, and flowcharts of participant project timelines,[55] facilitated the quick and direct access to complex or layered information. The aim was to collect and evaluate both conceptual and empirical evidence, while also "validating the reasons underlying the choices" (Guba & Lincoln, 1981, p. 350).

[55] For example Figure 4.52.

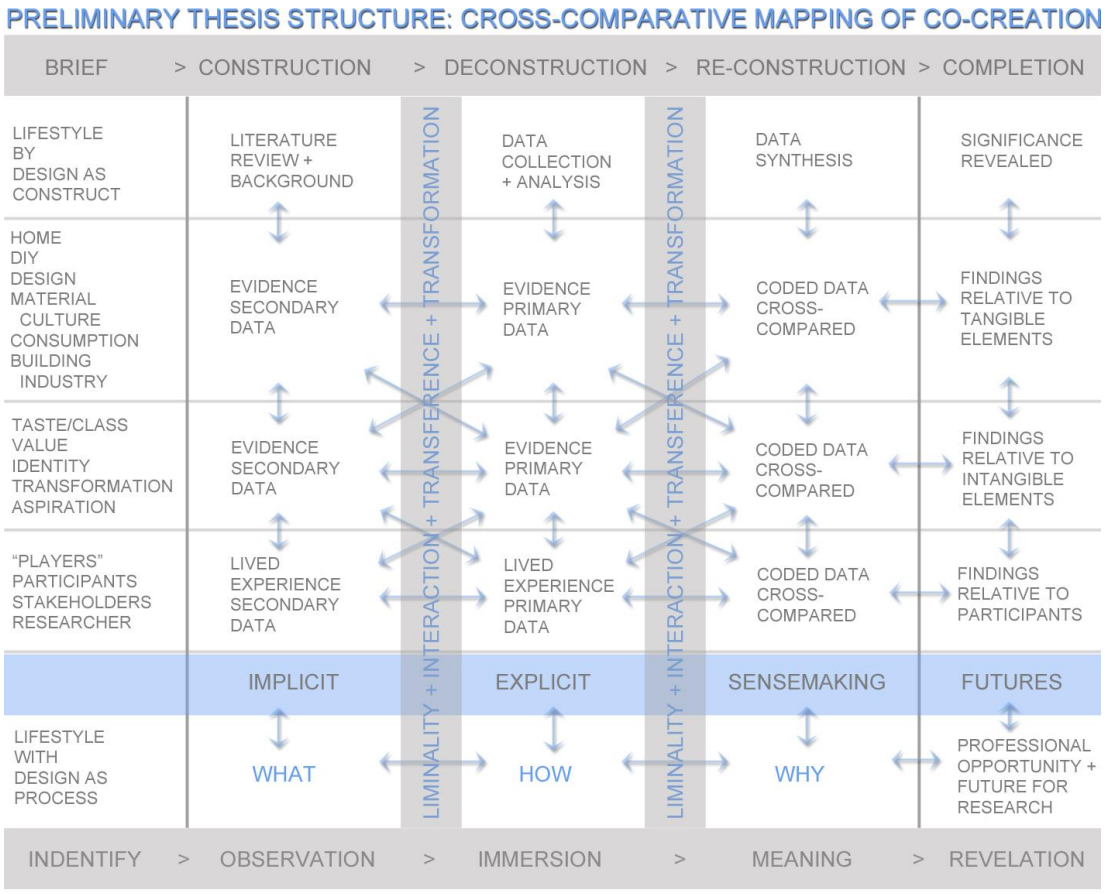


Figure 2.13: Preliminary cross-comparative analysis tool

(ii) Cross-comparative matrix

A cross-comparative matrix created for the case study helped consolidate layers of filtered data, aid analysis, and identify patterns of inclusion or exclusion, conflict or corroboration from the attributes of participant background, threads and key themes already identified with them (Figure 2.13).

(iii) Systems

Theoretically oriented *systems* have assisted in the analysis of data.[56] The *systems model of creativity*[57] in particular was found to be well suited to a design research inquiry, and proved valuable in exploring and evaluating the multiple layers of

[56] The activity theory system was also identified as a valuable way of analysing human practices; however, detail exploration was beyond the scope of this thesis.

[57] Csikzentmihalyi uses capitals to differentiate types of creativity, thus: "the small 'c' creativity … represents creativity in everyday life, that all of us are striving for … personal creativity, [which] will in some cases develop into large 'C' or cultural creativity" (Cziksentmihalyi, 1995). The systems model relates to "creativity that changes a culture", of which personal creativity is one sub-system (the culture and society are the other two).

practice, influences on behaviour variation, and patterns of interaction and activity (Csikszentmihalyi, 1999; Warde, 2005).

Csikszentmihalyi's systems model acknowledges human activity as creative, conscious, dynamic, both collective and individual, and significantly situated within complex relational structures. The components and connections making up the system provide an effective framework for situating practice within a network of individual, social, cultural and environmental factors (Sternberg, 1999b).

Thematic analysis framework

Subsequent analysis of connections between themes and the refinement of categories, to clarify insights and meaning emerging from the data, resulted in a *thematic network* centering on the five threads, and contributed to the refinement of the study concept (Figure 2.14):

> A thematic analysis with the aid of thematic networks … aids in the organization of an analysis and its presentation, and allows a sensitive, insightful and rich exploration of … overt structures and underlying patterns. (Attride-Stirling, 2001, p. 386)

The network emerged through web-like connections organised around three levels or classes of themes, basic (lowest-order), organising (middle-order) and global (highest order). *Basic* themes are simple categories of meaning identified in the data, which are then grouped into clusters or *organising* themes that allow for more abstract assumptions revealing more significant issues carried by the data (Corbin & Strauss, 1990)(Figure 2.15). At the highest order, according to Attride-Stirling, *global* themes are "super-ordinate themes that encompass the principle metaphors in the data as a whole" (2001, p. 389)(Figure 2.16). Importantly, the themes are fluid, not limited by any specific hierarchy, and grouped to embrace interconnectivity throughout the network.

2.5 Data synthesis

To synthesise the observations, interpretations, perceptions and patterns that have emerged from data analysis, a *sensemaking* process was used in preference to others tending to foreground the design process itself (Dubberly, Robinson, & Evenson, 2008).[58] This study adopted the model proposed by Jon Kolko in his article 'Abductive Thinking and Sensemaking: The Drivers of Design Synthesis' (2010).

An abductive sensemaking process

Kolko's model provides a comprehensive and effective framework for generating *sense* and cohesion from the multi-layered volume of data, situated experience and tentative theories:

> Synthesis is an abductive sensemaking process. Through efforts of data manipulation, organization, pruning, and filtering, designers produce information and knowledge. (2010, p. 17)

The process embraces "design as a way of organizing complexity or finding clarity in chaos" (2010, p. 15), and utilises design practice methods, actions and terminology that most designers would be familiar with, such as concept mapping, facilitating the transference of new knowledge to the design profession.

(i) Sensemaking

Sensemaking, according to Klein, Moon and Hoffman is an "action oriented process" assimilating lived experience with context and meaning, a "motivated and continuous effort to understand connections (which can be among people, places, events) in order to anticipate their trajectories and act freely" (2006, p. 91).

During analysis, data was externalised firstly to digital audio or image files, then to computer text software for transcription and coding, then to hand sketches and visualization/graphic software for organisation into a thematic network (refer section 2.3). The synthesis stage explored key themes and connections, looking

[58] For example, the Analysis-Synthesis Bridge Model, an alternative model developed for use by designers, considered for this research but subsequently rejected in favour of sensemaking.

deeper into participants' lived experiences in the context of creating/re-creating home through this network for meanings (hidden or implied) in the context of human action, behaviour and identity construction (Weick & Sutcliffe, 2005).

(ii) Abduction

Deduction and induction have generally been the traditional forms of formal logic used in analysis and synthesis activities, especially in disciplines such as mathematics and science. They are frequently shown as a dual system of reasoning moving in opposed directions, although in reality there are often overlaps.[59]

Kolko presents abductive logic as an alternative option; an informal and exploratory reasoning approach that "allows for the creation of new knowledge and insight … [and] acts as inference or intuition" (2010, pp. 20-21). Unlike the more formal methods of reasoning that focus on testing or developing a hypothesis more directly, abduction has been linked directly with design, insight and creative problem solving (Louridas, 1999; Peirce, 1998; Takeda, Veerkamp, Tomiyama, & Yoshikawa, 1990). The *abduction* approach engaged with personal experience, background exploration and the interpretations and insights provided by participants, all of which evolved throughout the course of the study (Figure 2.17).

(iii) Synthesis process

A framework was developed using three key methods of synthesis, re-framing, concept mapping and insight combination, each comprising three key actions that "yield a positive result in terms of both abduction and sensemaking" (2010, p. 21); these actions being prioritising, judging and forging connections. Diagrams developed as visualisation tools, although invaluable for communicating the essential aspects of the synthesis process, also tended to oversimplify the complexity of the task (Figure 2.18).

[59] Deductive reasoning usually moves from theory and a clear hypothesis to findings or knowledge via the steps of observation and confirmation. Inductive reasoning moves from situated knowledge, through observations of an occurrence or instance, to the construction of a tentative hypothesis, which might then be tested using a deductive process.

ANALYSIS STAGE 1: FROM CODES TO BASIC THEMES

The analysis process began with the development of a simple coding framework as the text (literature review) was broken down into issues, subsequently ordered into basic themes reviewed for relevance across the broad range of data. This stage facilitated the development of the inquiry concept.

CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT + DESIGN
NVIVO CODING PROCESS: TRANSCRIPTS

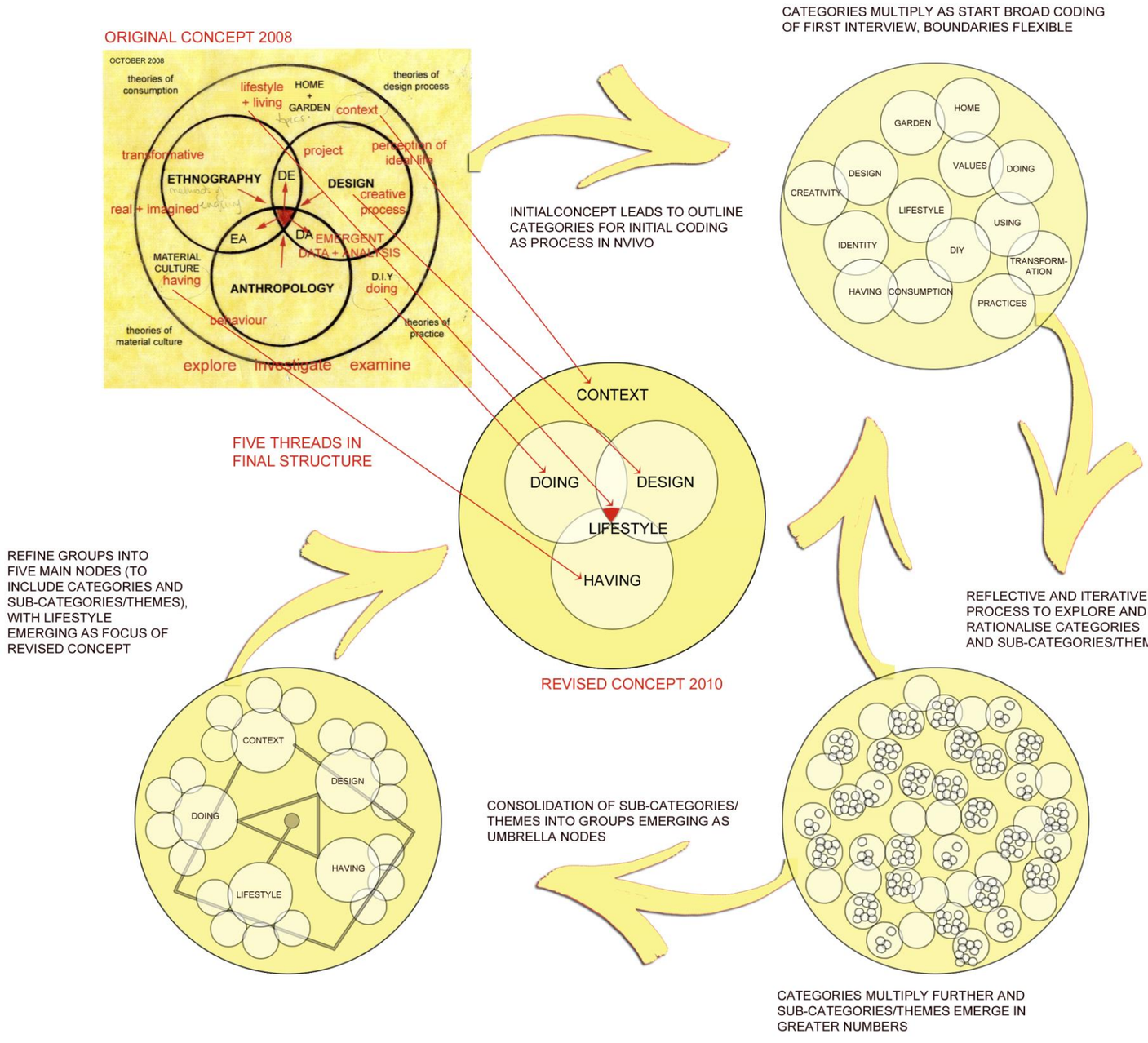


Figure 2.14:
Data analysis - Stage 1

ANALYSIS STAGE 2: FROM BASIC TO ORGANIZING TO GLOBAL THEMES

The next stage marked the beginning of thematic network based on, and extending, Stage 1 coding and mapping of topics identified through the literature review. The network incorporated primary data emerging from the survey and interviews, together with the participant media resource material. The consolidation process began with the ordering of simple themes into broad groups, and subsequent re-ordering until the organizational themes emerged.

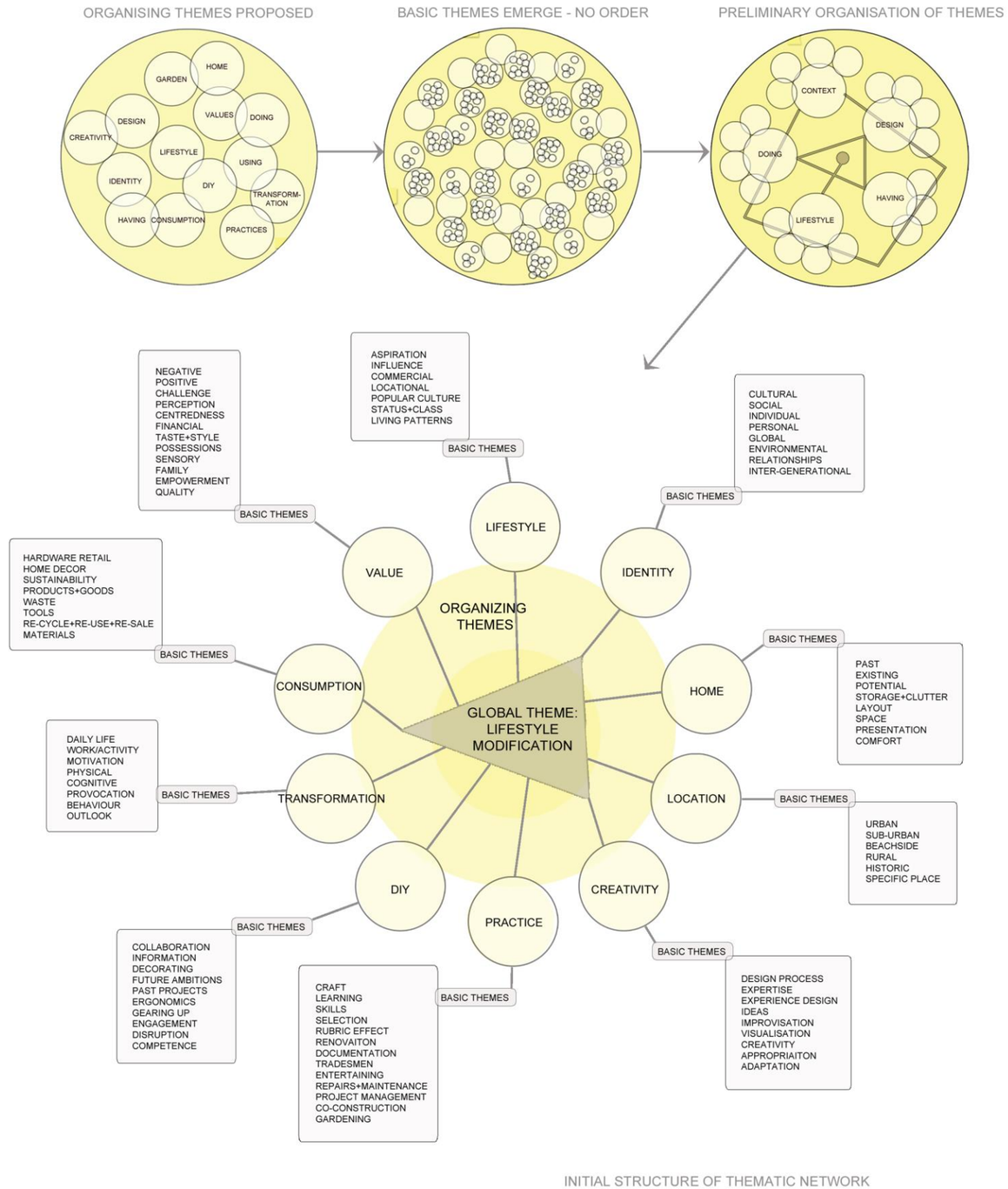


Figure 2.15:
Data analysis - Stage 2

ANALYSIS STAGE 3: FROM THEMES TO NETWORK TO INTERPRETIVE PATTERNS

The final stage explored and interpreted the resulting patterns (from the previous stage) on the basis of the research question(s) through the refinement of themes and connections based on the data emerging from the case study. The data, empirical and otherwise, included field observation, video clips, participant transcriptions, emails, photographs and project diaries. The development and mapping of organizational themes identified the emergent meanings and issues shaping the five key threads – *context, having, doing, design* and *lifestyle*. Further, given this study was generally focused towards a better interpretation of lifestyle useful to designers, this process established that *lifestyle* was better understood as a global theme generated through networked clusters of interpretation and meaning.

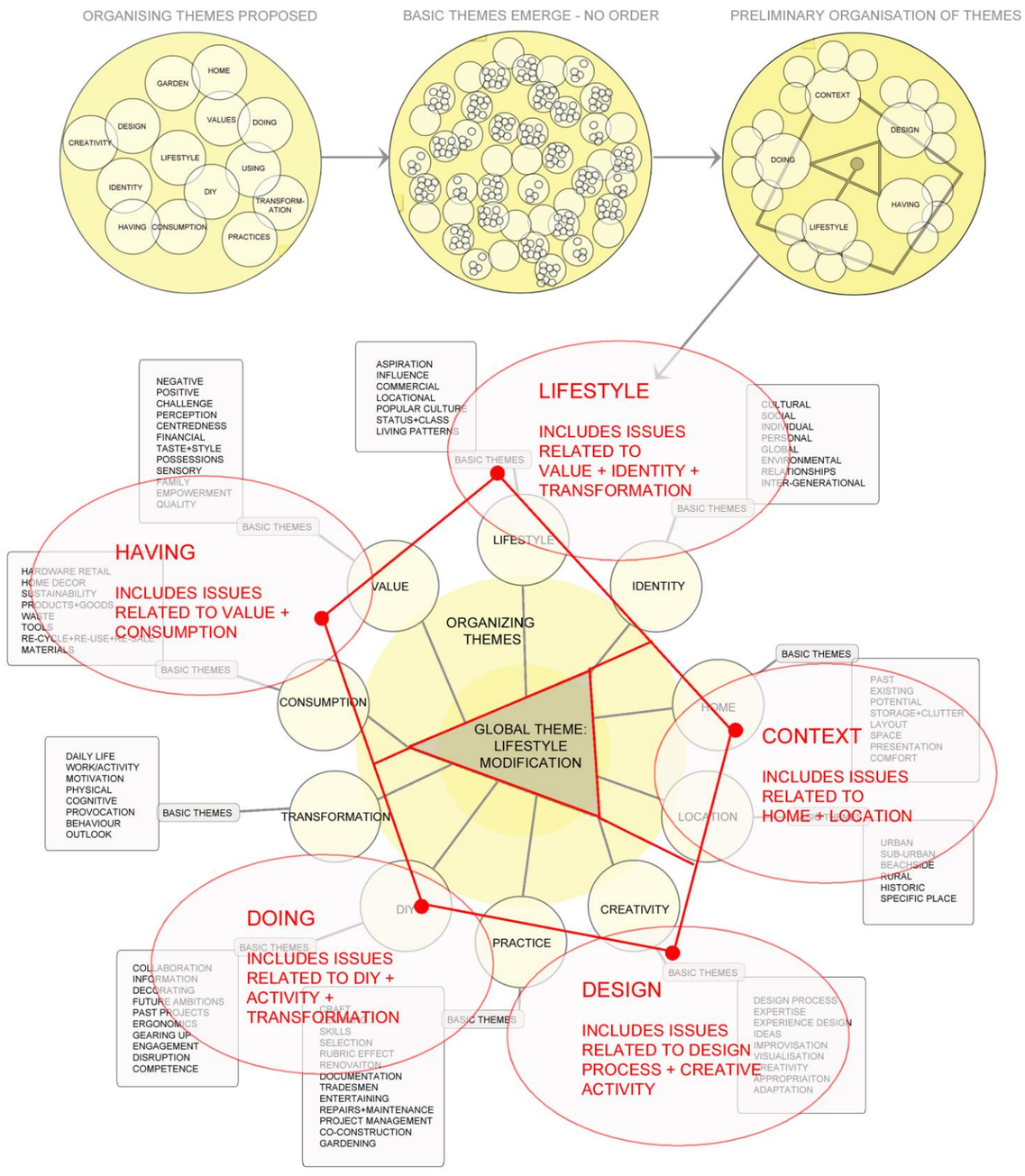
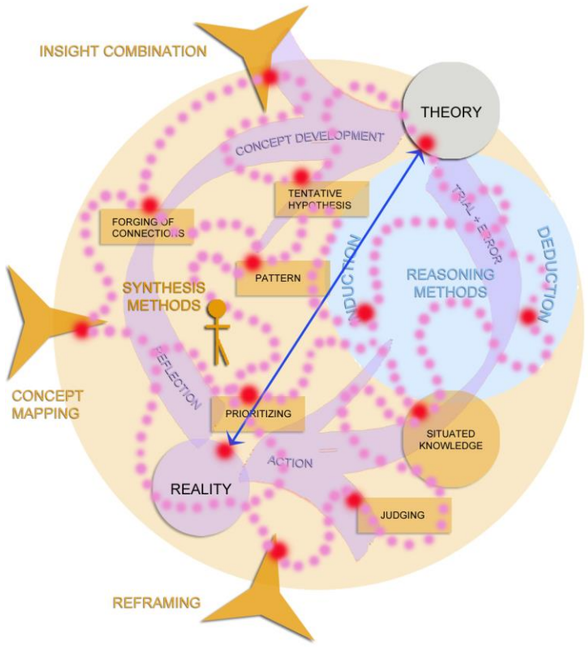


Figure 2.16:
Data analysis - Stage 3

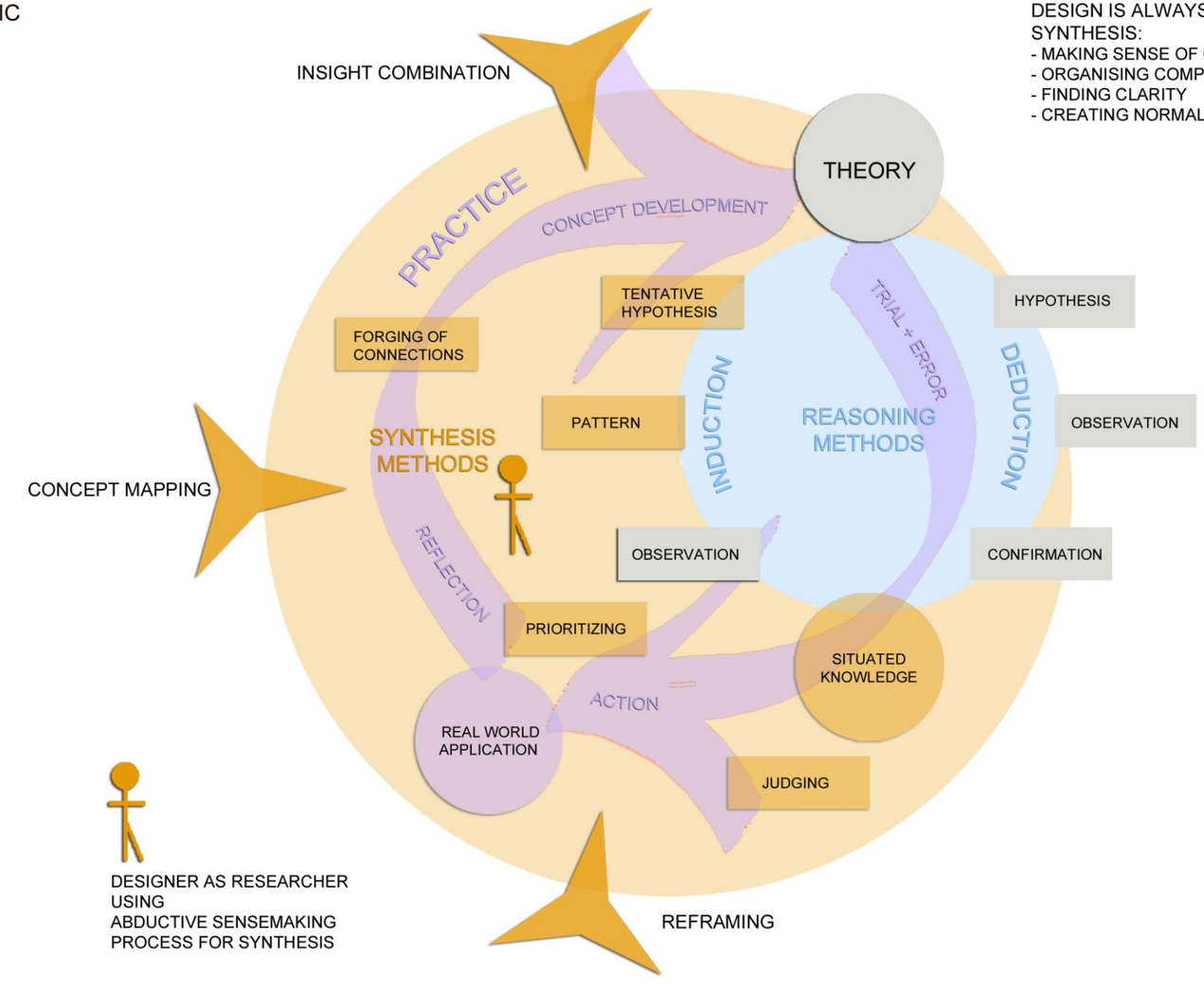
REPRESENTATION OF ABDUCTIVE AND FORMAL LOGIC AS APPLIED TO DESIGN RESEARCH AND PRACTICE
(plus indicative process as insert diagram below)



PROCESS:
LINKING INTUITION AND INFERENCE WITH EXTERNALIZED DATA.
ABDUCTIVE REASONING CONTRIBUTES STRONGLY TO SENSEMAKING PROCESS

INTENTION:
CLARITY, FINDING 'SENSE' AND MEANING; CONNECTING IDEAS AND REALITY

TOUCHPOINTS:
METHODS + ACTIONS TO HELP ORGANISE, PRUNE AND FILTER DATA



DESIGNER AS RESEARCHER USING ABDUCTIVE SENSEMAKING PROCESS FOR SYNTHESIS

DESIGN IS ALWAYS ABOUT SYNTHESIS:
- MAKING SENSE OF CHAOS
- ORGANISING COMPLEXITY
- FINDING CLARITY
- CREATING NORMALCY

ABDUCTIVE LOGIC

THREE KEY METHODS:
- REFRAMING
- CONCEPT MAPPING
- INSIGHT COMBINATION

THREE KEY ACTIONS:
- PRIORITIZING
- JUDGING
- FORGING OF CONNECTIONS
WITH
- TENTATIVE HYPOTHESIS
- PATTERN

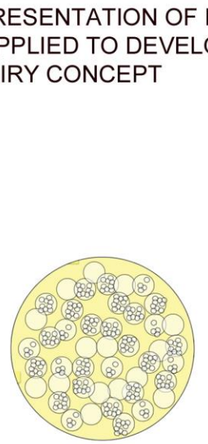
FORMAL LOGIC

TWO KEY METHODS:
- DEDUCTION
- INDUCTION

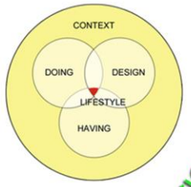
FOUR KEY ACTIONS:
- HYPOTHESIS/TENTATIVE HYPOTHESIS
- OBSERVATION
- CONFIRMATION
- PATTERN

Figure 2.17:
Data synthesis - abductive and formal logic

REPRESENTATION OF DATA SYNTHESIS PROCESS AS APPLIED TO DEVELOPMENT OF RESEARCH INQUIRY CONCEPT



7.
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ELEMENTS
HELPS IDENTIFY MEANINGFUL CONNECTIONS



8.
INVESTIGATION OF DESIGN INSIGHTS AND PATTERNS EMERGING FROM DATA; AFFINITIES MAPPED IN NEW CONCEPTUAL MODEL; PROVOCATION FOR FURTHER RESEARCH (OR NEW PROJECT)

DEVELOPING CONCEPTS AS PROVOCATION FOR EXPLORING AND TESTING NEW IDEAS; MAKING IMAGINATIVE CONNECTIONS

1.
INITIAL CONCEPT AS PROVOCATION FOR RESEARCH; BROAD FRAME OF NOTIONS SKETCHED AS STARTING POINT AND GENERAL CONTEXT; CASTING NET WIDE

INSIGHT COMBINATION

PROVOCATION

EXTRAPOLATION

FORGING OF CONNECTIONS

SYNTHESIS

THEORY

CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT

TENTATIVE HYPOTHESIS

TRIAL + ERROR

6.
CONTINUAL RE-ORGANISATION AND REPRESENTATION OF NEW AND SITUATED KNOWLEDGE ENABLES EXPLORATION OF DESIGN PATTERNS

SYNTHESIS:
MOVING IN; MOVING OUT; MOVING ROUND

PATTERN

NEW KNOWLEDGE

SITUATED KNOWLEDGE

2.
NEW KNOWLEDGE GATHERED AND ASSESSED FOR RELEVANCE; FILTERING AND PRUNING; NEW AVENUES EXPLORED; MORE FILTERING

CONCEPT MAPPING

REFLECTION

DESIGNER AS RESEARCHER USING ABDUCTIVE SENSEMAKING PROCESS FOR SYNTHESIS

JUDGING

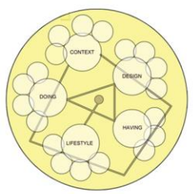
5.
MAPPING RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN EMERGING THEMES CREATES PROVOCATIVE IDEAS ABOUT SHARED MEANINGS EMERGING FROM DATA; HOW DOES NEW CONCEPT APPLY IN REAL WORLD?

ACTION

REAL WORLD APPLICATION

SYNTHESIS

EXTRAPOLATION



PROVOCATION

PRIORITIZING

REFRAMING

EXTENDING AND APPLYING IDEAS TO TEST EFFECTIVENESS AND EXPLORE NEW SCENARIOS

4.
NEW FRAMES DEVELOPED AROUND KEY AREAS EMERGING; NEW PERSPECTIVE ON DATA LEADS TO FRESH IDEAS AND NEW CONCEPTUAL UNDERSTANDING OF CONTEXT

3.
CONTINUAL GATHERING OF DATA REQUIRES PRIORITORIZATION TO IDENTIFY MOST RELEVANT OR COMPLIMENTARY THEMES/IDEAS EMERGING

Figure 2.18:
Data synthesis process

The synthesis process aimed at producing new knowledge through "manipulating, organising, pruning and filtering data in the context of a design problem" (2010, p. 27) in this case; the problem articulated through research questions. The inquiry concept, introduced as a tentative hypothesis dependent on a "normative framing of the situation" (Schön, 1984, p. 132), presented a set of assumptions that were then subject to exploration. Kolko's approach facilitated a shift from implicit to explicit knowledge in order to "challenge taken for granted assumptions" (Gunn, 2010) about people's behaviour. This process facilitated re-interpretation of the threads and also the connections, overlaps and gaps between them.

This stage enabled the synthesis of preferences, insights, implications, inferences and values emerging from the data, identifying, enriching and then shifting frame(s). As the study evolved through a methodological bricolage, "an eclectic process that brings about something new" (Clark, Onal, & Lindemalm, 2010, p. 161), the practitioner rather than the practice became the new focus of inquiry (section 4.6).

2.6 Summary

The nature of both the inquiry and the methodology emerged during the course of research and as a result of embracing an open investigation process. Although this thesis led to the emergence of bricolage as (i) an approach to design that embraces improvisation and resourcefulness, and (ii) an approach to project work that expands opportunities for professional designers with regard to wider stakeholder involvement, the thesis also became a testing ground for the application of bricolage as a methodology for design research.

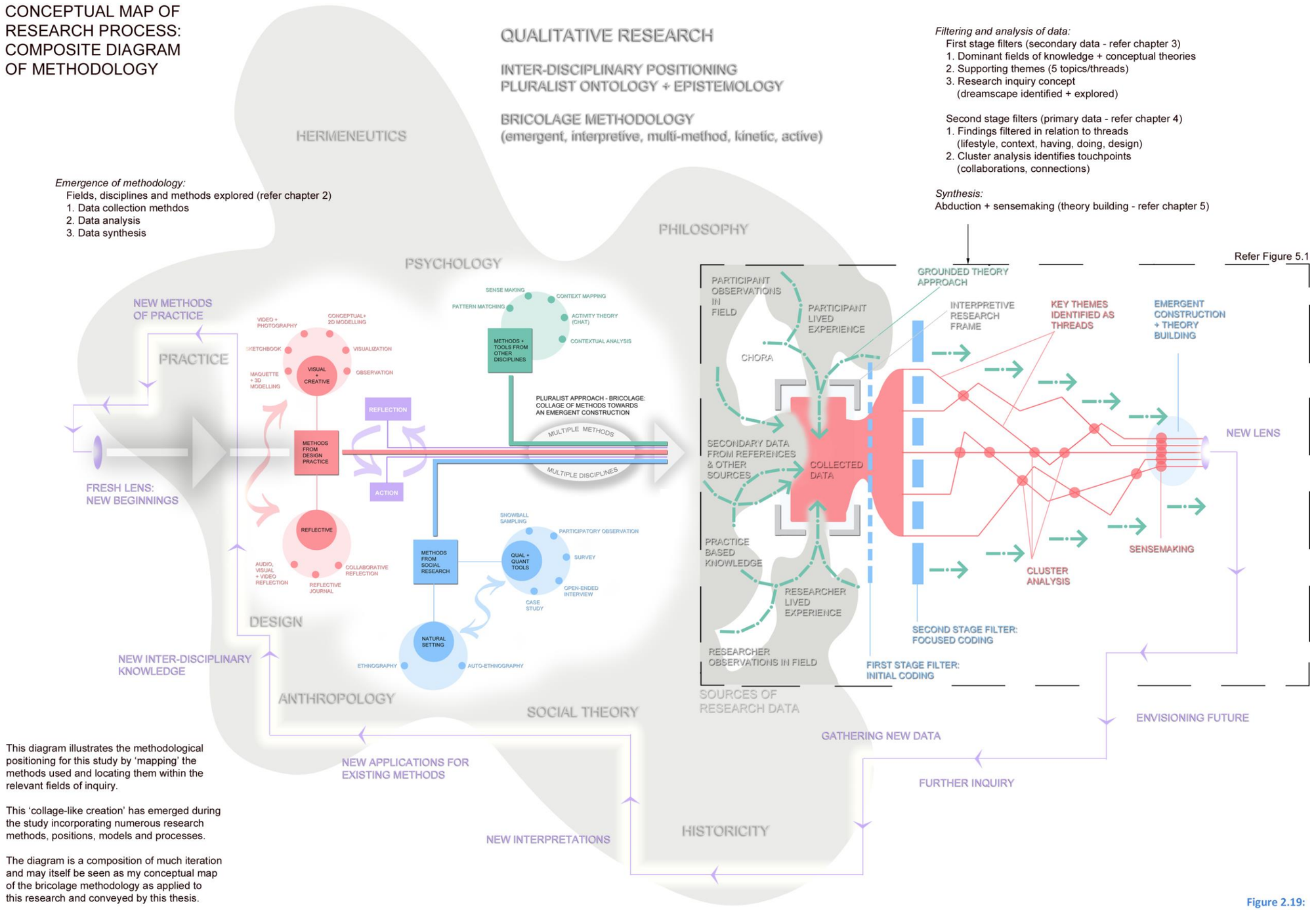
Crossing disciplinary boundaries and engaging multiple areas of study necessitated methodological flexibility.[60] Mapping the methods, and later the data as a conceptual relationship, assisted in navigating the research terrain, incorporating

[60] To include: consumption, material culture, anthropology, design research, sociology, psychology, design process, lifestyle, home renovation and DIY – refer chapter 1.

the lived experience of participants as collaborators as well as the researcher as bricoleur and mapmaker. The inquiry process began broadly with design, anthropology and practice theory as approaches to the research, and ultimately concluded with work of methodological bricolage.

As a methodology, bricolage facilitated the incorporation of multiple methods and approaches, acknowledged the interpretive stance taken, and situated the data within multiple realms, from the social and cultural to the domestic. Dealing with issues as broad as material culture and society and as individual as one person's DIY activity, the methodological willingness to embrace complexity and boundary work has been crucial in undertaking data collection and analysis. A diagrammatic summary of the methodology applied to this research (Figure 2.19) reveals a collage-like creation emerging towards the end of the study.

CONCEPTUAL MAP OF RESEARCH PROCESS: COMPOSITE DIAGRAM OF METHODOLOGY



Emergence of methodology:
Fields, disciplines and methods explored (refer chapter 2)
1. Data collection methdos
2. Data analysis
3. Data synthesis

Filtering and analysis of data:
First stage filters (secondary data - refer chapter 3)
1. Dominant fields of knowledge + conceptual theories
2. Supporting themes (5 topics/threads)
3. Research inquiry concept
   (dreamscape identified + explored)

Second stage filters (primary data - refer chapter 4)
1. Findings filtered in relation to threads
   (lifestyle, context, having, doing, design)
2. Cluster analysis identifies touchpoints
   (collaborations, connections)

Synthesis:
Abduction + sensemaking (theory building - refer chapter 5)

Refer Figure 5.1

This diagram illustrates the methodological positioning for this study by 'mapping' the methods used and locating them within the relevant fields of inquiry.

This 'collage-like creation' has emerged during the study incorporating numerous research methods, positions, models and processes.

The diagram is a composition of much iteration and may itself be seen as my conceptual map of the bricolage methodology as applied to this research and conveyed by this thesis.

Figure 2.19:
Mapping the research process – composite diagram

Chapter 3: Mapping the field

3:0 Overview

This chapter begins with the framing of the research landscape, indicating where the study sits in relation to specific fields of knowledge, hence *mapping the field*. The research landscape is articulated as a *field of dreams,*[61] and includes discussion on the key themes that further situate the study and contribute to the definition of threads.

3.1 Research landscape

Gaps in literature

Research into lifestyle, broadly interpreted as *ways of living*, initially generated a bewildering field of complementing and competing perspectives,[62] particularly when taken to begin with the "recurring overall context of the behaviours, interactions, options, knowledge stocks and evaluative settings of a man" (Hradil, 2001, p. 46, translated from original), and extend to encompass society, culture and the environment. References to lifestyle in literatures from sociology, psychology, economics, politics and media studies build a complex tapestry that presents the type of challenge Don Norman (2014) feels designers need to address:

> To stop designing isolated things (or even services) and recognize that they are all part of larger, more comprehensive systems (and we should be designing the entire system)… The tools are part math, part science/engineering, and part art, intuition, and creativity.

Although it has been suggested that lifestyle "can be used in a number of ways to inform design" (Press & Cooper, 2003, p. 28), current literature has yet to address

[61] Although the reference to 'the dream' in chapter 3 focuses primarily on the Great Australian Dream of home ownership, the film 'field of dreams' constructs a conflict between real and imagined situations, between the lead character's domestic situation and dream for a better life (English, 2002).
[62] For example; sustainable and unsustainable, healthy and unhealthy, contemporary and alternative lifestyles.

lifestyle as a comprehensive *system* accessible to designers: a system of *identifiable* interactions, experiences, values and transitory patterns of behaviour (Lamprecht & Stamm, 1998; Postel, 2005). In popular use, the concept persists as a vague generalisation connected to standards of living and based on individual preferences associated with social, cultural and, most persistently, consumption trends (Shaw & Williams, 2004; Sobel, 1983).

To advance discussion on the role of designers in addressing complex social, economic, environmental and political issues, such as the unsustainable way of living pervasive in Australia[63] and many other parts of the developed world, a greater understanding of everyday activities contributing to resource depletion and household consumption is needed. One such activity is DIY home renovation, which, as a self-navigating approach to building, traditionally falls outside the scope of work for building design professionals, and as such the relationship between architects and DIYers as practitioners is neglected in literature on either DIY home renovation or design practice. Further, despite an extensive volume of empirical and theoretical literature on the meaning and representation of *home,*[64] there is a paucity of discussion on the activity and impact of renovation, the act of re-making of home and the co-evolution of place and inhabitant (Baum & Hassan, 1999; Mallett, 2004).

Home renovation is just one sector of the residential building industry, however, the modification of built structure (demolition, re-build, fit-out), contributes to the high levels of consumption and waste linked with domestic construction (Allon, 2008; Halliday, 2008; Spence & Mulligan, 1995).[65] There is a growing volume of literature on sustainable design of products, building materials, systems and environments available for the housing industry–new build and renovations, but

[63] It has been suggested that the pursuit of the Great Australian Dream has led to increasing urbanisation and contributed to unsustainable levels of domestic consumption (Garnaut, 2003).
[64] For example, relating to spiritual, emotional and psychological importance, as a physical place, a gendered space, a building, a country, a feeling, a type of sanctuary, etc.
[65] For example, 'the Australian Bureau of Statistics 2003 Yearbook' reported an upward trend with, on average, 37% of the solid waste in metropolitan areas comprising construction and demolition material, with 430kg/year per capita reported in 2001, rising to 790kg by 2007.

very little addressing the problematic need or desire for continual change (Goodwin, 2003; Lash & Urry, 1994; McDonough & Braungart, 2002).[66] Likewise, the financial and functional advantages of renovating a home to suit modern preferences are well documented, yet there is little exploring consumption behaviour directly related to home as the site of continual transformation.

Although Government papers call for more sustainable lifestyles and greater contributions to the economy from innovative/creative industries, there is relatively little guidance on shaping lifestyles, or on new roles that designers from traditional fields will need to embrace in answering these calls (Jeffcutt & Pratt, 2002; Smith, 2011a). However, literature emerging from design anthropology and non-traditional design disciplines, such as those located within the "participatory design territory" (Sanders & Stappers, 2012, 21), is contributing to an expansion of design research and practice.

Whether organised through design consultants and building contractors or completed on a DIY basis by the homeowner, home modification is an everyday activity that attracts considerable attention from the media. Promoting new products and technology and better home environments, images of dream lifestyles feed the human desire for change, and thus the ongoing patterns of consumption and renewal (Goodwin, Nelson, Ackerman, & Weisskopf, 2007; Karlsson, Dellgran, Klingander, & Garling, 2004).

Viewed through the lens of popular culture, the dominant image of home improvement is one of architect-designed homes with stylised interiors, carefully composed photographs of perfect homes with subtle signs that the occupants are living the good life, and not-so-subtle product placement (Kretchmer, 2004; Newell, Salmon, & Chang, 2006). Such media content suggests everyone can have the dream lifestyle; *you* can change *your* home and live like this. As people take action

[66] The issue of sustainability is of relevance in wider discussions on the benefit of establishing 'useful' interpretation(s) of lifestyle, however, exploring the notion of 'sustainable/unsustainable lifestyles' is beyond the scope of this thesis.

to improve their homes in anticipation of a better life, lifestyle moves into the realm of design, construction and consumption. However, the current literatures relating to home renovation, DIY activity and design overlook the significance of lifestyle as a concept linked with self and place transformation.

Leading a more fulfilling life and having a better standard of living[67], are pervasive aspirations in contemporary society, not only for migrants from foreign shores, but for many established homeowners, home makers and residents. Here, the search for an ideal lifestyle generates a field of dreams embracing both actual and perceptual elements of daily life at home, creating a vision for the future, *a dreamscape* transforming the way we live.

Mapping the dreamscape

Whether, as a result of this inquiry, lifestyle is subsequently interpreted as a plausible *illusion* of an ideal life, an achievable *goal* of home improvement, or the *outcome* of activity such as designing, making or using or all three, it is first necessary to consider what has been written about lifestyle, design and DIY in connection with *the dream.*[68] The Great Australian Dream identifies a belief that homeownership[69] leads to a better life, one of independence, aspiration, security and success. Property ownership brings with it the freedom to modify the physical configuration of home and alter surface treatments to suit individual tastes or requirements. Modifying home is a way of "defining, maintaining and recreating self-identity" (Rapoport, 2005, p. 350), creating at once a stage for social interaction and a private sanctuary to suit individual patterns of living.

The following sections examine available literature, predominantly from the fields of design and anthropology, material culture and consumption studies, sociology, and practice theory, to shed light on issues contributing to the search for an

[67] In other words, seeking an improved state of being and having, of self and place.
[68] The dream, when explored through discussion on lifestyle (section 3.2), provides a layer of connective tissue between the threads.
[69] This study has focused mainly on homeowners, identifying a sector of the population who are later (section 3.7) located by Bourdieu's *habitus* as a socio-economic group who are able to make choices about how they live, and free to alter the built form of their home in a way rental tenants are not.

improved way of living *at home*. The pursuit of an ideal lifestyle is explored through the conceptualisation, planning and realisation of DIY home improvement activity; an activity geared towards the transformation of home in order to experience a better life, a life shaped by design and fuelled by the media.

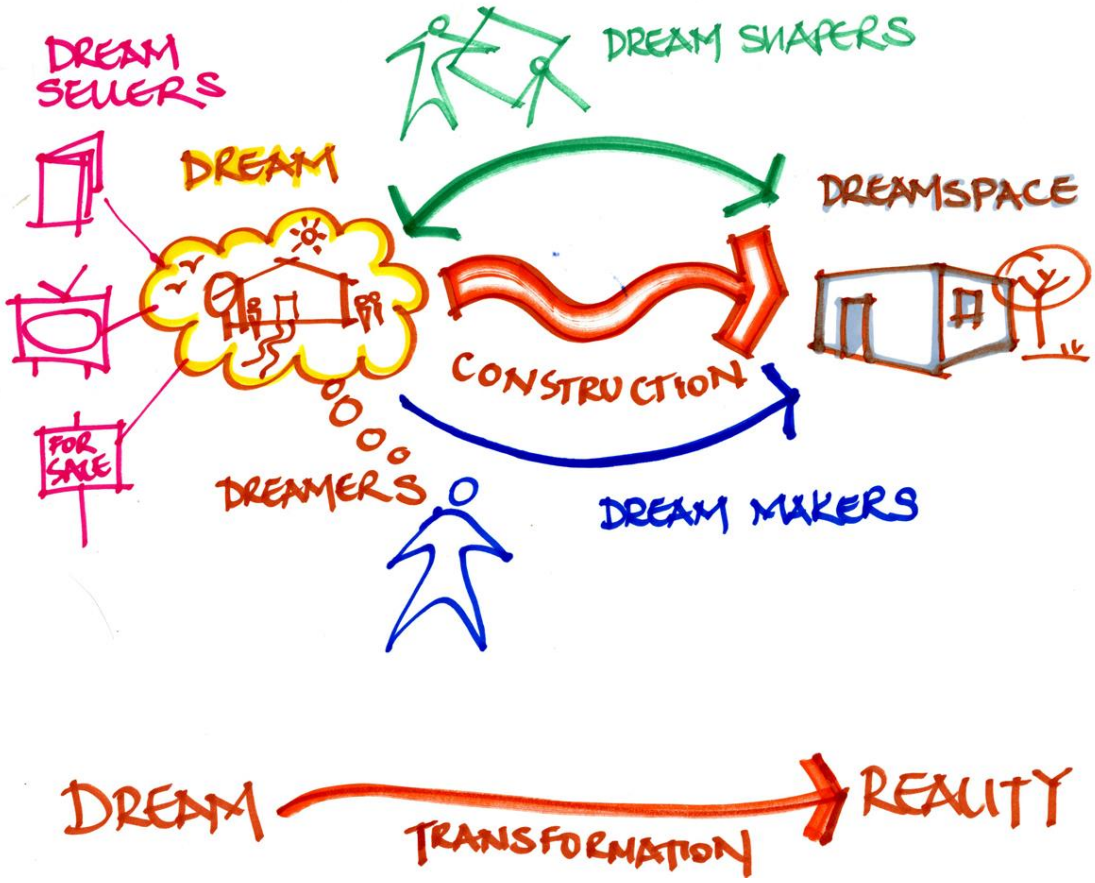


Figure 3.1: Sketch dreamscape

Each aspect of the research *dream*scape (Figure 3.1) is considered in turn:

The Dream

Section 3.2 explores key interpretations of lifestyle, identifying current uses and connotations of the English form of the word. The German term for lifestyle, *Lebensstil*, is acknowledged as inspiration for the inquiry concept and relational nature of threads.

Dreamsellers

Section 3.3 presents the media as a key source of imaginary living styles—offering domestic bliss, advertising *dream* homes, promoting constant renewal and selling better lifestyles. This section considers home renovation through the lens of media and popular culture sources, linking the space of home strongly with consumption.

Dreamspace(s)

Section 3.4 reflects on the meaning of home as the site of consumption and change, and the space where tensions between the homeowner's real and imagined lives play out.

Dream construction

Section 3.5 considers the active realisation of dreams, addressing the practices, activities and modes of engagement linked with making changes to the home. The discussion includes design and use practices, DIY as a self-build activity, creativity, bricolage and transformation.

Dreamshapers

Section 3.6 provides an alternative view of dream and real home construction, comparing DIY with the design-build approach to home renovation. This section highlights key aspects of the design process that result in the re-shaping[70] of existing homes to meet changing patterns of living. Traditional and emerging design processes are considered for relevance to DIY.

Dreamers and dreammakers

Section 3.7 briefly introduces some of the issues faced by homeowners who dream of improvement and the challenges faced by those who plan and undertake DIY projects. This background contributed to all threads, establishing the threshold

[70] The association between design and shaping is taken from the German *Gestaltung*, focusing on the process of re-shaping homes and lifestyles, acknowledging the inclusion of prior forms and experiences, and embracing individual histories, rather than considering design in relation to the creation of something new, such as a new house. (Betts, 1998; Dorschel, 1995, 2003; Schulze, 2013)

across which the research steps into the lives of participants in this study, the focus of chapter 4.

Dream tracery

Section 3.8 filters key aspects of the literature review, drawing topic areas together in five threads, *lifestyle, context, having, doing*, and *design,* which trace between dream and real worlds. Although each thread leads in a different direction, the analysis of participant data takes place at the point where they converge. The contribution of research findings to each thread, and to the site of convergence, is discussed in chapter 4.

3.2 The Dream

Of the five threads outlined in chapter 1, *lifestyle* was the most deeply embedded in the research questions and most problematic to capture and locate physically, psychologically and conceptually. Discourse in popular culture and from academic sources was found to be insubstantial; all accounts were vague on the application and meaning of the word, and there appeared to be no consensus on the defining characteristics of lifestyle.

Lifestyle ill-defined

A nebulous term

Essentially the word *lifestyle* bonds two commonly used nouns, life and style. Each word is immediately recognisable and yet each subject to the broadest of interpretations; one more closely associated with something we experience—a life, and the other with something we observe, create or make—a style. Bolted together, however, the composition falls outside the most commonly used Australian words[71] and the semantics get fuzzy. Lifestyle is frequently bolted to other words, such as alternative, healthy, unsustainable, ultimate, celebrity, retirement, beach, seductive and sea change. It is also added to destinations in a

[71] The Australian Oxford Mini Dictionary provides the 20,000 'words most frequently used' in Australia (Gwynn, 2010).

form of place-commoditisation, often by real estate agents promoting the desirability of locations; a commonplace practice in Australia's popular beachside suburbs, for example Cottesloe[72] lifestyle, Gold Coast[73] lifestyle (Figure 3.2). Even in publications aimed at the design and personalisation of home, lifestyle is described as "a nebulous term that could be defined in many different contexts" (Faulkner & Faulkner, 1975, p. 15).

Figure 3.2: Location-oriented real estate marketing selling the lifestyle experience

In academia, lifestyle features mostly in literature on modernity, ideology, class, taste and consumption, frequently linked with socio-economic status and mobility, and hippy counter-culture, celebrity television and everyday domesticity (Binkley, 2007; Brunsdon, 2003). Grant McCracken discusses lifestyle as a concept that has been "provocative and unproductive in almost equal proportions" (2001, p. 124). Micheal Sobel defines lifestyle as "one of the most abused words" in use but offers a meaningful definition relying heavily on an interpretation of the word *style,*[74] as "a distinctive, and hence recognizable mode of living … [which] consists of expressive behaviours that are observable" (1981, p. 28). Bourdieu describes the plural form, lifestyles, as the "systematic products of habitus" (1984, p. 172), qualified by

[72] Popular beachside suburb of Perth, Western Australia.
[73] Coastal city in the South East of Queensland, Australia.
[74] Sobel takes the definition of 'style' from Gombrich (1968) as "any distinctive, and therefore recognisable way in which an act is performed or an artefact made or ought to be performed and made" (1981, p. 26).

conditions of existence and social/cultural structures[75], considering lifestyle in the singular form to be "a system of classified and classifying practices, i.e., distinctive signs ('tastes')" (1984, p. 171).

Sobel traces the emergence of lifestyle from Simmel to Marx and Weber to Veblen (Bendix & Lipset, 1966) as something both derived from and indicative of class and social status, inclusive of behavioural activities and orientations (Handel & Rainwater, 1964), and of shared consumption patterns, values and tastes (Myers, 1974; Zablocki & Kanter, 1976). Where Sobel argues that class, status and consumption (as a behaviour) together are the "best indexes" of lifestyle in America since the last World War (1981, p. 15), Mike Savage et al., is more specific, suggesting lifestyle is a valid post-modern concept integrated with *middle-class* consumption patterns (2001).

Class, taste and identity

Material culture and consumption perspectives on the interface between humans and their social and cultural life, and with their environment (including objects, artefacts and spaces) are central to exploring what is understood as lifestyle (M. Tomlinson, 1998). Within this field, several texts making reference to lifestyle establish a link with class systems, identity and social mobility, in particular locating the rise of a *new middle class* with sufficient resources to develop leisure pursuits (D. Bell & Hollows, 2006; Wynne, 1998). The conscious modification of home in pursuit of an improved way of living reflects contemporary consumption patterns responding to aspiration trends:

> With the rise in standards of living, it is argued that issues related to consumption, rather than production, are becoming more relevant; and that 'lifestyles', rather than 'classes' are playing an increasingly important part in shaping a whole range of attitudes and behaviours. (Crompton, 1998 , p. 140)

Sobel also supports the close correlation between lifestyle and behavioural choices, determining that lifestyle "is one of the most important bases of prestige" (1983, p.

[75] Later in this section, the notion of structure is considered in relation to 'life chance'.

522), and can be measured by household expenditure. However, where Crompton highlights a shift from production to consumption in connection with lifestyle, Sobel identifies the individual as "a producer of his or her lifestyle" (1983, p. 521).

Pressure to optimise the presentation of home for prestige or social acceptance rather than practicality or convenience, draws home improvement further into discussions on class distinction, judgements of taste, conspicuous consumption, and the rise of the *leisure class* (Bourdieu, 1984, 1989a; Castells, 1996; Miller, 1987; Simmel, 1997). Mass media supporting or encouraging conscious engagement with the fabric of home, through "cultural intermediaries, image-makers, audiences and publics" (Featherstone, 1990, p. 17), reinforce links between material culture, consumption and the media context influencing home improvement consumer behaviour (Cornwall & Drennan, 2004; Lury, 1996; Starr, 2007).

Observations by Pierre Bourdieu and Michel Foucault, who establish relationships between class, taste, lifestyle and consumption, are indicative of the way taste has continually been linked to display, aesthetics, objects and décor, all contributing to a search for identity and style. Bourdieu's much quoted "taste classifies as it classifies the classifier" (Bourdieu 1989, as cited in Palmer, 2008, p. 3), reinforces the connection between judgements of taste and social position (Frow, 1987). Bell and Hollows consider how lifestyle, media and taste have co-evolved, and suggest that "practices of lifestylization in everyday life" are a very recent phenomenon arising from contemporary "social, economical and cultural processes", acknowledging Giddens' view that "lifestyle concerns the very core of identity, its making and remaking" (2006, p. 1).

Even though it may be a recent focus of research, with our ways of living changing so rapidly, many studies into various aspects of lifestyle are already reflecting superseded situations.[76] Thus, the notion of lifestyle persists in being an

[76] Including: the 'Health and Lifestyles Survey' 1984-5 and 1991-2, 'Social Change and Economic Life Initiative Surveys' 1986-7, the AECP 1994-5, and even the more recent 'Social Status, Lifestyle and Cultural Consumption Project' 2004-7.

"empirically difficult" (M. Tomlinson, 1998, p. 26) area of investigation, evolving as technology and industry modify society, as our sense of identity shifts from the collective towards the individual, and as the stratification of class taste and culture become increasingly heterogeneous (M. Tomlinson & Warde, 1993).

Lifestyles paradigm

Life choice and/or chance

Building on the ambiguity identified by scholars such as McCracken and Sobel, conflicts of meaning associated with the term lifestyle have opened up debates that cross the boundaries of economics, sociology, psychology, material culture, ethnicity, politics and sexuality (Bryman, 1988; Bryson, 2010; Featherstone, 1991; Giddens, 1991). One of these debates took place during the 1980's in relation to Max Weber's concept of *Stilisierung des Lebens* translated as the 'stylisation of life', and *Lebensfuhrung* variously linked with sociological interpretations of everyday life, a life system and life-world (Cockerham, 2005).[77] According to Abel, Weber's use of the term in the early twentieth century was incorrectly translated in the later English-language versions of his work,[78] so that:

> Weber's distinctly different terms '*Lebensfuhrung'* (life conduct) and '*Lebensstil'* (lifestyles) have the imprecise and singular meaning '*lifestyle'* in Anglo-American literature…. Translated literally, *Lebensfuhrung …* refers to choice and self-direction in a person's behavior, not lifestyles (1993, p. 551, emphasis in the original)

Abel determines that *Lebensstil* is the meta-term within which *Lebensfuhrung,* the element of choice or self-direction, and *Lebenschancen*, or life chances understood as "the probability of realizing those choices" (Cockerham, 2005, p. 324), are the two main components. The German interpretation essentially considers lifestyle to be a system that embraces sociological context and everyday activities,[79] a way of life actively constructed and symbolically expressed (through consumption and

[77] In association with the work of Habermas and Marx.
[78] For example, in Weber's 'Economy and Society' published in 1922, translated in 1978.
[79] Taking the German translation, the thesis investigates lifestyle as a complex *system*, reflecting on Don Norman's call for designers to address systems in their entirety (section 3.1).

behaviour) by individuals and groups, while also subject to external pressures of society and culture (Lamprecht & Stamm, 1998).[80]

Weber's status-based conceptual framework, proposing "choice and chance as separate components in the activation and conduct of a lifestyle" (Cockerham, 2005, p. 61), has been utilised by scholars in two fields; leisure and health studies. Anthony Veal, for example, presents an argument for studying leisure in relation to lifestyle to properly locate it within a social context. Veal highlights the limitations of Marxist theory on work-leisure relations based on class division, seeking a broader perspective on leisure and society through pluralist analysis using Weber's work on lifestyle (1989). Acknowledging the Marxist perspective places leisure in a wider social order, Veal notes that status groups are less limited in definition and delineation than class groups, because "status is as much about symbols as material things" (1989, p. 144).

Nearly all of the texts referencing Weber's concept in relation to lifestyle link it with issues of status politics and prestige, while at the same time discussing the Marxist perspective on class, Bourdieu's concept of habitus, class distinction and the *space of lifestyle* (Appendix 6), and Veblen's focus on conspicuous consumption (Blackshaw, 2013).[81] These alternative concepts are often presented as distinct rather than inter-related frameworks of social structure that consider lifestyle in a more holistic way (Deem, 1989). Some contributors to the debate are openly critical of this divisive and stereotyping approach and the omission of issues such as gender, race, ethnicity and power relations (Scraton & Talbot, 1989).

The troublesome dichotomy emerging through discourse on leisure and lifestyle, class *or* status, production *or* consumption, economic power *or* prestige, illustrates to some degree Abel's observations on the misinterpretation of Weber's

[80] Lifestyle has also been described in terms that could equally describe culture, for example, by Zurcher *et al*, as "the system of values, customs, and habits distinctive to a group" (1971, p. 218). This in turn based on the earlier work of J. R. Gusfield on status politics (1963), connecting 'life style' with issues of prestige and status rather than class divisions based on economic relationships.
[81] For example, referencing the work of: Lorentzen (1980), Page and Clelland (1978). C. Wright Mills (1972) and Gusfield (1963).

terminology. A more inclusive interpretation of the lifestyle concept can be found in relation to health studies. William Cockerham builds on the work of Weber and Bourdieu,[82] proposing a theory on health lifestyles that he feels is missing. His theoretical model, the *health lifestyle paradigm* (Appendix 5) is based on both individual and collective behaviour pathways influenced by *both* life choice *and* life chance. Cockerham takes into account the issues of age, gender and ethnicity, together with *collectives*, groups of people linked in social relationships, such as the participants in this study, and *living conditions*, indicating the quality and utility of the domestic environment (1993).

Although focused on health behaviour, the health lifestyle paradigm provides a useful structural model to begin mapping lifestyle as a system of components and relationships located in a social context for this study (Figure 3.3). Further, the model indicates that patterns or ways of living are created or constructed through practices; these practices are subject to external constraints/structural issues and internal motives based on experience/agency issues:

> Consequently, people have to consider a course of action if their actions are to be either constrained or enabled. People therefore align their goals, needs, and desires with their probabilities for realizing them and choose a lifestyle according to their assessments of the reality of their resources and class circumstances. (Cockerham, 2005, p. 61)

The theory highlights the interplay of choice and chance, emphasising that life choices are not always voluntary,[83] rather that lifestyles are "collective patterns of … behaviour based on choices from options available to people according to their life chances … [thus] we assign priority to chance over choice" (Cockerham, Ruuten, & Abel, 1997, p. 338). The influence of *habitus* on the *dispositions to act* in this model, is taken to "encompass action that is habitual and even intuitive … [and] molds aspirations and expectations into "categories of the probable'" (Cockerham,

[82] Also citing Giddens (1991), Crompton (1998) and Featherstone (1987) as significant contributors to his argument.
[83] Contrary to Weber who implies choice is voluntary and that choice takes priority over chance, the health lifestyle theory accords closer to Bourdieu on these issues, with structure or *habitus* influencing choices (Cockerham et al., 1993), refer Appendix 5 and 6.

2005, 61), creating a strong link between socio-economic differentiation and legitimate choice (Hradil & Schiener, 2005)[84].

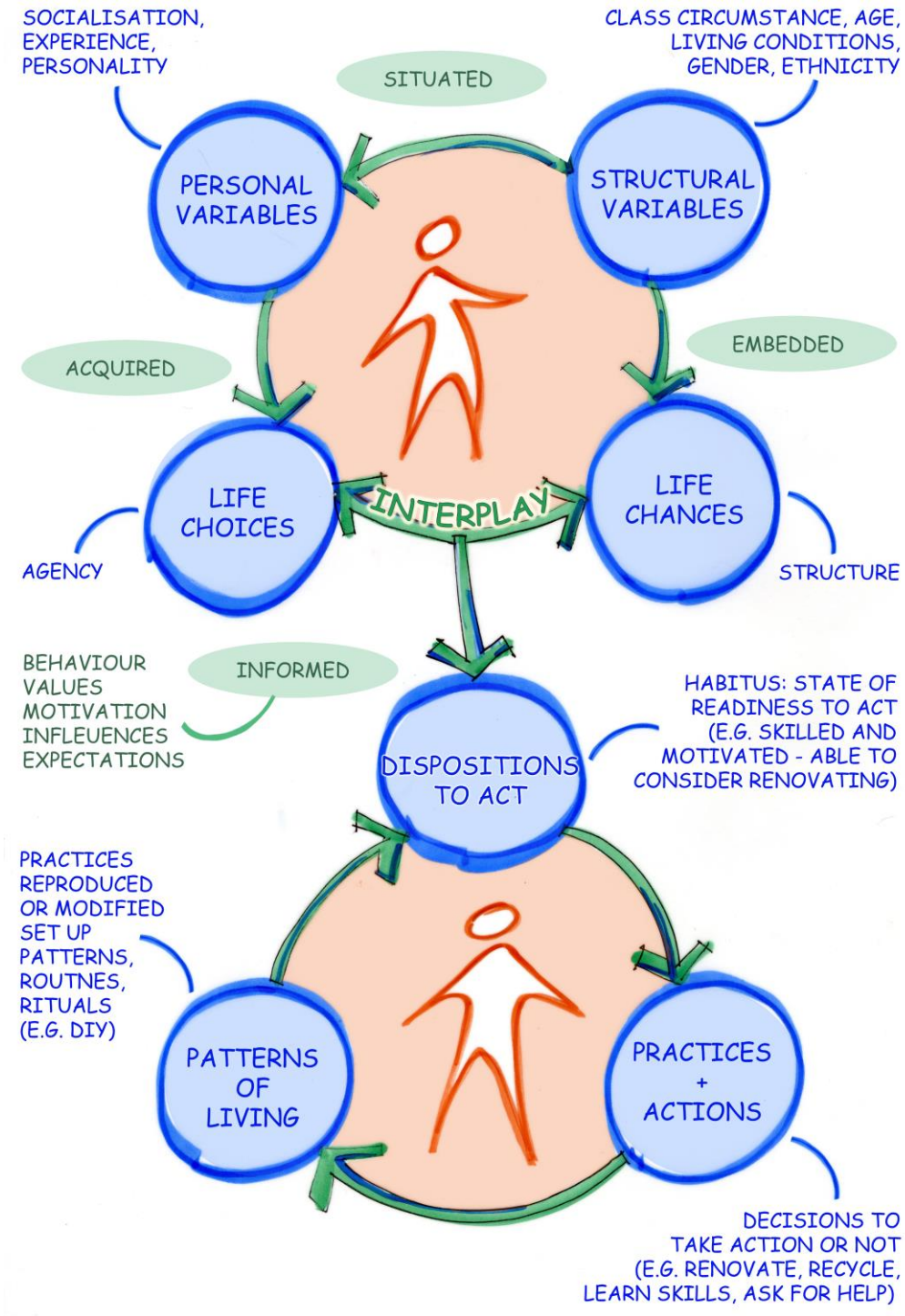


Figure 3.3: Lifestyle paradigm as dynamic interlinked system

[84] This link between behaviour and opportunity has been demonstrated in the health sciences, for example where "low-socioeconomic status (SES) groups more often act in ways that harm their health" (Pampel, Krueger, & Denney, 2010, p. 168). Negative health behaviour such as smoking for example, is not directly related to a lack of finance, but to consumption patterns.

In the context of this study, the model suggests that the greater resources a homeowner has, the more choices are available when considering home improvement. Choices might include, the extent of work to be done—such as a partial or total renovation, the method of work—using professionals for all or some of the project, or the standard of finishes, fixtures and appliances—ranging from quality bespoke to mass-produced items. However, where DIY remains the only option for people without funds to employ builders and/or architects, thus largely influenced by life chance, it is also considered *serious* leisure,[85] an activity *of choice* for the middle classes (Allon, 2008). Motives behind DIY are discussed later in connection with creativity (section 3.6), appealing to personal rather than economic values. The implications of pathways connecting the eight key components in the model (Figure 3.2), helped narrow the study focus to practices and patterns of behaviour that imagine, anticipate, negotiate and realise transformations to home and so to ways of living at home.

Although Cockerham's theory is selective and simplified, it presents a model for "lifestyles [that] not only reflect but also reproduce social differences in ways of living" (1997, p. 328), against which empirical evidence may be considered. Shifting the theory away from the specifics of health related behaviour; the interplay of both chance *and* choice can be considered significant contributors to other ways of living and consumption patterns. Building on Max Weber's work on status,[86] together with theoretical input from the work of Simmel, Bourdieu and Giddens, Cockerham places greater emphasis on *Lebenschancen* (life chance/probability) than *Lebensfuhrung* (life conduct/choice). However, he foregrounds both in presenting *Lebensstil* (lifestyle) as a system—a complex set of circumstances, social structures, cultural dimensions, actions (voluntary and involuntary), practices and influences (internal and external).

[85] Serious leisure here taken to be one of three types of leisure identified by Stebbins, the others being "casual leisure and project based leisure" (2007, p. xii).
[86] Chiefly accessed through 1946 and 1978 English language translations from 'Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft' (*1922)*, (Cockerham et al., 1997, p. 324).

Lebensstil

Although a structural theory of lifestyle has emerged from the health sciences as a useful model against which findings from this research could be considered,[87] Abel's revised interpretation of Weber's concept was also valuable for developing the research inquiry concept. Descriptive accounts[88] of *Lebensstil* led to the early identification of key themes associated with a broader interpretation of lifestyle, which evolved into five threads for this study (Postel, 2005).

Three broad categories were established from the mapping of themes, and later identified through the threads *doing (*and *design)*, *context* and *having* respectively (Figure 3.4), as follows:

> (i) *Practices*, or ways of responding to the constraints and opportunities presented to an individual as a result of life choices and chances. Both the leisure and health studies applying *Lebensstil* indicated the significance of participation in patterns of culturally oriented activity or indeed inactivity (Holt, 1997).
>
> (ii) *External factors* influencing perception of and involvement in practices, often resulted in expression of identity, preference or taste that is culturally mediated (D. Bell & Hollows, 2006; Leiss, Kline, Jhally, & Bottrill, 2005). Individual needs and wants leading to consumption were identified through "conventional marketing research on personality/values, where lifestyles are conceptualised as shared consumption patterns spanning a variety of consumer categories" (ibid.).[89]
>
> (iii) *Internal factors* influencing perception of and involvement in practices, relating to both economic and personal values, motives and aspirations. Cultural context or background are considered important in influencing

[87] For example, to determine causal relationships.
[88] From translated texts.
[89] Identified as *milieus* by Hradil (1987).

> people's behaviour, "the way people perceive everyday society, react to it and use it in line with common values and attitudes" (Safr, 2006, p. 17).

Literature of German origin identified various types or styles of *Lebensstil,* the main one being *Lifestyles of Health and Sustainability* (LOHAS), comprising two sub-groups, *Lifestyles of Voluntary Simplicity* (LOVOS) and *Participatory Consumption* (PARKOS). The acronym LOHAS, was first used in 2000 by American sociologist Paul Ray reporting on a thirteen year study,[90] that had identified a growing segment of consumers who seek authenticity through valuing*:*

> Design, health, environmental and social justice, and ecological sustainability in the lifestyles they lead.… They actively pursue a life that they feel is environmentally and socially fulfilling by expressing themselves and making a practical difference.… They are careful consumers who reject products that are imitations, of poor quality, disposable, or cliché in style, and they want to know where products originate, how they are manufactured, by whom, and what becomes of them in disposal. (Hoffman & Haigh, 2010, p. 11)

According to Ray, these *cultural creatives* are people whose worldview has shifted and with it "changes in value, your fundamental life priorities, changes in lifestyle" (2000, p. 4), bringing together not only changes in consumption, but also the patterns of production, in effect the way people earn their livelihood. A handful of commentators also suggest there is evidence of a substantial cultural shift towards the "'climate-conscious' consumer" (Geden, 2009, p. 132) and sustainable consumption (Thogersen, 2005).[91] LOHAS and its sub-group PARKOS,[92] however, are mostly discussed in terms of target consumer groups who have selective materialistic orientations, essentially highlighting a conflict between sustainability ethics and expectations of high quality goods and services (Sanne, 2002; Spaargaren, 2003).

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[90] The study comprised "survey research on more than 100,000 Americans, hundreds of focus groups, and about sixty in-depth interviews that reveal the emergence of an entire subculture of Americans" (Ray, 2000, p. 4).

[91] A shift which suggests architects might find a new market of clients more engaged in the process of change in order to find a better lifestyle, rather than focusing on design (the outcome of designing) as a product of consumption.

[92] No substantiated information was available in English to expand further on PARKOS, although blog entries suggested a type of consumer who seeks transparency of and communication with companies they purchase things from.

CONCEPT MAP OF LEBENSSTIL

NETWORK OF THEMES DISCUSSED IN RELATION TO LEBENSTTIL AND THREE BROAD CATEGORIES FROM WHICH THREADS EMERGE

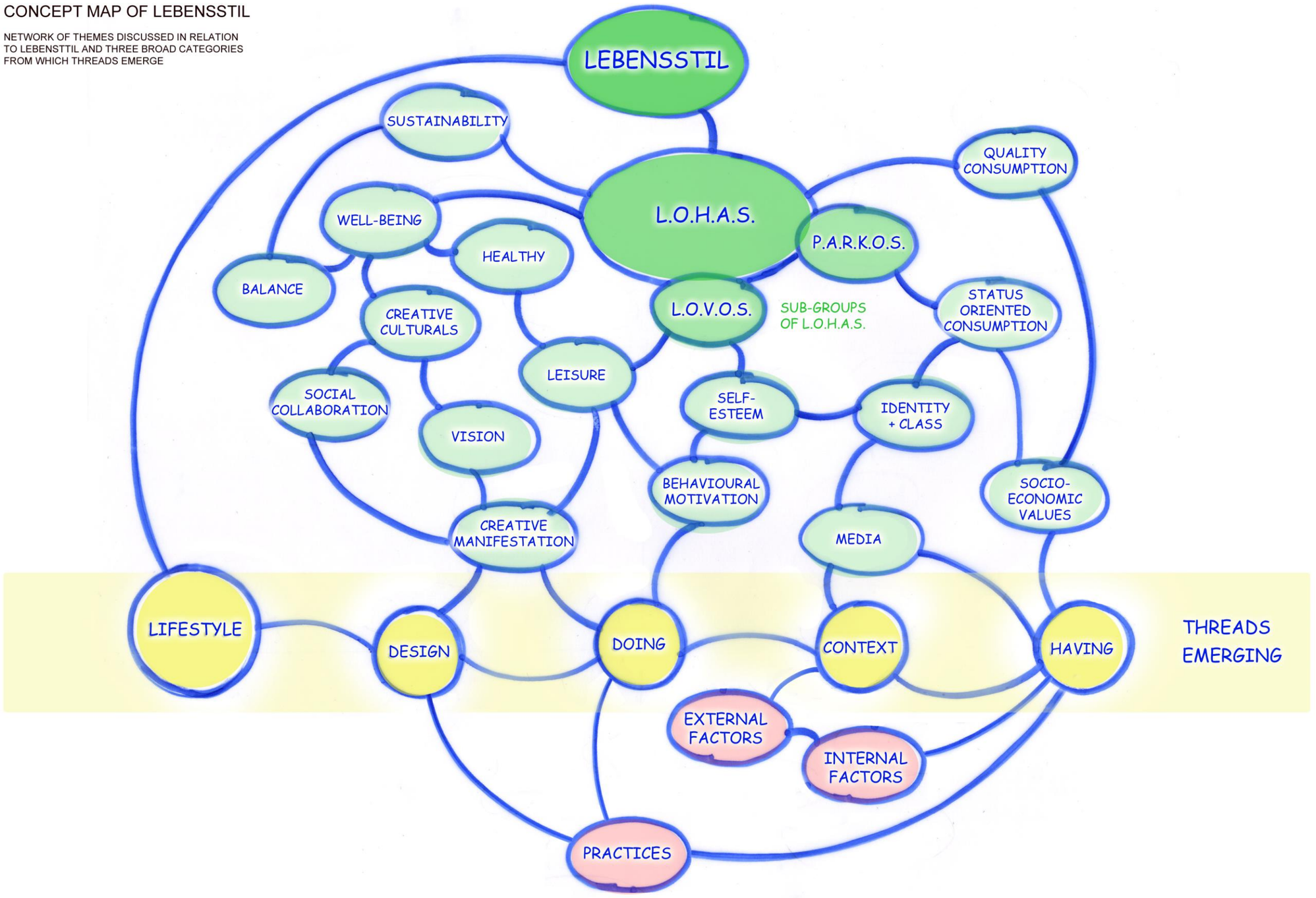

Figure 3.4:
Concept map of Lebensstil with threads located ..

By contrast, the sub-group LOVOS identifies people choosing to lead a simple, slow, non-materialistic life, being self-sufficient, staying off-grid and connecting with nature, sometimes linked with the German Simple Living movement (Vannini & Taggart, 2013b).[93] LOVOS individuals are against materialism, value time over possessions;[94] seek alternative methods of production and the pursuit of a more fulfilling and self-determined life (Stengel, 2011). The fragments of information available on LOHAS and cultural creatives typically present a picture of well-educated, middle income Americans who "want to be involved in creating a new and better way of life … [through] being active themselves" (Ray & Anderson, 2000, p. xiv).[95] Literature does not address how this is achieved or experienced in relation to the home, other than that they are "typically eclectic decorators … status display happens *inside* the house, not outside … it is a display of personal good taste and creative sense of style" (Ray & Anderson, 2000, p. 36).

Ray's findings infer that cultural creatives are well situated in terms of socio-economic class and social status, positively shaping their life chance and expanding their opportunities for life choice. Although creativity and the need for independence are characteristics of the cultural creative group, pro-active behaviour of the type that may include DIY practice is only referenced in relation to *creative manifestation* as:

> The process of bringing a vision, inspiration, design, or a big creative idea through from the realm of the imaginal into the everyday physical and social world.… Creative Manifestation is an intensely social process of both creative and practical work, often involving many people, from the most visionary to the most practical. (Anderson & Ray, 2014)

[93] The movement espouses three approaches to changing consumption patterns: (1) Voluntary simple living which traces back to Elgin's "Voluntary Simplicity… [revealing] harmonious and purposeful living" (1981, p. 23), (2) raising the awareness of consumers about the leverage of their buying decisions, and (3) educational efforts with reference to consumption, production and sustainability (Gold & Rubik, 2009, p. 304).
[94] Thus, they choose not to exchange time for money, as labour/paid work, to purchase things.
[95] The authors of the study 'Cultural Creatives: How 50 million people are changing the world' (2000), admit the average participant was middle class, however, claim the range of individuals interviewed and surveyed was so broad it was "almost meaningless to describe them in terms of occupation, education or income" (Anderson & Ray, 2014).

Creative manifestation[96] acknowledges personal transformation through creativity and activity, and issues such as authenticity, engaged action/participation and self-actualization are highlighted. Ray's study concludes that "values are the best single predictor of real behavior" (2000, p. 7), locating cultural creatives by "key identifiers … values, worldview and lifestyle, not demographics" (Anderson & Ray, 2014). Considering the centrality of the term lifestyle in literature on LOHOS and as one of Ray's key criteria, it is significant that neither includes a definition.

In summary, the German interpretation of *Lebensstil* has been more helpful in conceptually locating this inquiry than the English term *lifestyle*; situated within a broad understanding of class, status and social structure, echoing *verstehen,*[97] and as a system emerging from the values and meanings attached to patterns of behaviour. *Lebensstil* guided the inquiry towards a network of issues ranging from cultural practice, consumption and sustainability, to leisure, participation and self-sufficiency.

A dream for sale

Returning briefly to English applications of the word, the waters are muddied further when considering the proliferation of *lifestyle* in marketing and popular media. The use, misuse and selective interpretation of lifestyle clearly carries economic value, and yet there appears to be no conclusive description of what lifestyle means to the average home-owning Australian, currently representing about 70% of the population (J. Gibson, 2009).[98]

[96] According to Attiwill, creative process can be considered as a "manifestation of time", where the use of *manifest* prioritises the hand over the eye, and "process over outcome and event over object" (Attiwill, 2005, p. 46).
[97] Although there is insufficient room to explore verstehen in this thesis, as a methodological pluralism it is complimentary with bricolage methodology (Martin, 2000).
[98] Statistics based on a Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics report using Australian Bureau of Statistics data from 2003-04.

'Key Concepts in Communication and Cultural Studies' attempts to describe lifestyle, and although vague, the description highlights the role of practice[99] and the external influence on perceptions of identity and social class[100]:

> Lifestyle[s] - Distinctive configurations of cultural identity and practice which are associated particularly with modern conditions and forms of cultural consumption … conceived as 'fragments' of any modern social formation, indexing degrees of 'choice', 'difference' and creative or resistant cultural possibilities … modern euphemisms for social class. (O'Sullivan, Hartley, Saunders, Montgomery, & Fiske, 1994, p. 167)

Early in the research it became crucial to better understand what *lifestyle* represented in the everyday realities of people in Western societies who, living where and how they do, perpetuate and contribute to "the reality … that our lifestyles are unsustainable", according to climate scientist Pachauri.[101] Reversing or countering this trend is problematic given the difficulty of defining exactly how lifestyle, sustainable or not, can be defined, and by who:

> It is not easy to define lifestyle both comprehensively and empirically. The World Health Organization … [adopt] a broad definition … 'lifestyle is taken to mean a general way of living based on the interplay between living conditions in the wide sense and individual patterns of behaviour as determined by sociocultural factors and personal characteristics'. (Contoyannis & Jones, 2001, p. 2)

In line with the WHO definition, previous observations by Sobel, Handel & Rainwater and Savage, amongst others, have linked lifestyle with consumption patterns, the social space of leisure activity[102] and human agency (Abercrombie & Urry, 1983; Giddens, 1991; Wynne, 1998). Already multiple threads were implicated in the construction of lifestyle; the external influence on consumption, class, identity and taste as *context*, the internal drive for a better life, motivation to possess and display as *having*, and the standards of aesthetic and style, places and products, normally assigned to the realm of *design*.

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[99] Explored through the threads *design*, *doing*, *having.*
[100] Captured in the threads *context* and *having.*
[101] Rajendra Pachauri, the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) chair speaking ahead of the 2009 Copenhagen summit. Pachauri effectively presents the audience with a choice, to carry on in the same mode or change the current way of living.
[102] For example, where an activity such as DIY is considered to be social practice, influenced by both life chance and life choice.

The physical, messy, noisy world of DIY as *doing*, however, seems far removed from the idealised notion of lifestyle portrayed by the media outlined in the next section. To determine to what extent lifestyle is perceived as something tangible, and whether homeowners have embraced the real estate marketing image of lifestyle as a location or property-specific issue, it was necessary to find out more about those to construct and transmit the dream.

3.3 Dreamsellers

The *dream* lifestyle, the perfect life without the complexity of living, remains on the horizon beyond the material world of tangible things and physical places, at least in the pages of magazines and on television. The reality is more confronting. Media vehicles assist in turning the dream of a better life into a commodity, connecting ideals of status and success as symbols of *life chance*, with the physical presentation of home life, and translating ideas into products, wants and needs into purchases and practices as *life choices*.

Media construct

Sphere of media influence

Australia and the United Kingdom (UK) form the dominant geographic influence for this study[103], represented strongly in the precedent studies mostly of UK origin, and observed through media magazine publications and real estate and local newspaper samples collected mostly in Australia. Participant media samples revealed no significant geographic boundaries in the way home is treated, mostly as a container of consumables, a gallery of artefacts and an organisational hub. Both countries were identified by the 2013 Human Development Report as having a high standard of living, with Australia ranked as the second best country to live in.

The Human Development Index (HDI) measures three basic factors of human development: “a long and healthy life, access to knowledge and a decent standard

[103] The majority of participants were living in either the UK or Australia at the time of the study, some having experienced living in both countries.

of living" (United Nations, 2010). The 2010 report describes the facilitation of leading *creative lives* as one of the key outcomes of well-structured human development, with the 2013 report further emphasising the importance of equity: "Every person has the right to live a fulfilling life according to his or her own values and aspirations" (United Nations, 2013, pp. 2-3). However the constant search for *greater* well-being, freedom of choice, and self-expression, *better* comfort and convenience, and *larger* and more luxurious homes has created a crisis of sustainability for human development on a global scale.[104]

With high standards of living, why do Australians continually modify their homes in order to further improve the way they live, and what is the environmental, economic and personal cost of this pursuit? Conscious political agendas[105] and sustained economic prosperity has led to high levels of home ownership and fuelled a desire for "wealthier lifestyles … of self-conscious and self-focused consumption" (Allon, 2008, p. 57), accompanied by "an almost insatiable need to engage in the practice of making practical and aesthetic improvements to the home" (N. Smith, 2011, p. 3). Homeowners have become consumers and their property a bricks and mortar commodity. This shift in perspective, supported by messages conveyed by television programmes that "focus on lifestyle with a property twist" (Wakelin, 2003, 30), has significant implications for increasing unsustainable levels of consumption. Popular culture sources contribute to the participants' understanding of home as a physical, social, economic and personal place to occupy and manipulate, and to consumption activity; consumers seeking the good life through home-making and home improvement.[106]

Thus the search for dream lifestyles and ideal homes is conveyed in the media and materialised in consumable goods and retail products, equipment and hardware,

[104] The labelling of lifestyle as sustainable or unsustainable was introduced in section 4.2 as an issue of choice.
[105] John Howard's Government, voted into power 1996, provided policies to encourage home ownership, and encourage Australians to develop a more 'homely political outlook' (Allon, 2008).
[106] The study survey subsequently aimed to find out what the primary influences were on the way people lived in relation to their home environment, and how persuasive the media images of an ideal life were in encouraging participants to make changes to their homes.

and predominantly observed in relation to domestic home improvement projects. Renovation has broad appeal for the masses and in turn contributes to the economy; property owners as consumers typically transform an empty building into a home, maintain and upgrade, eventually buying or building newer, bigger. As housing affordability and consumer confidence decreases in affluent countries such as Australia, the DIY home improvement retail industry increases,[107] fuelled also by popular reality DIY programmes.[108]

Media driving consumer culture

Material studies of particular relevance to this research focus on the "role of home as the site of consumption" (Miller, 2001, p. 3), the home as a commodity (Allon, 2008), and the consumer culture of modernisation and post-modernisation impacting home life (Featherstone, 1991; Savage et al., 2001). Within this, home improvement as a social, practical and consumption-oriented activity, is situated in a complex cultural environment heavily influenced by messages transmitted through the media about *material accomplishments*, and the collection or manipulation of *stuff* (Attfield, 2000; Miller, 2010; Molotch, 2003; Palmer, 2008). Either making the public aware of what is available, or connecting people directly with commodities, the media is an efficient conduit for transmitting ideals, ideas and objects into the home, inspiring and facilitating acquisition.

Mass media communicates influential and persuasive messages to large audiences, presenting the ideal home as a vision through a lens of material culture. As the subject *and* object of targeted promotion, home for the populous has become an *entanglement* of material objects, place and people under pressure to change, sometimes suspended between ideal and real (Ingold, 2008).[109] Life *at home* emerges as the intertwined network of culture and nature, people and "myriad

[107] The renovation sector is predicted to grow fifteen percent over the next fifteen years, to an estimated worth of $25.5 billion by 2016-17. Source: IBIS World forecast – Retail Trade Report G4231 Hardware and Building Supplies Retailing (Chanthadavong, 2011).
[108] For example, 'The Renovators' and 'The Block'.
[109] For example, with half-decorated rooms and partially completed renovations.

kinds of things" (Olsen, 2010, p. 87), a mixture of the material and social in hybrid relations (Buchli, 2002; Latour, 1993; Miller, 2001b).

The difficulty of unraveling artefacts from other aspects of domestic life demonstrates the dominance of consumer culture in both real and ideal notions of home.[110] The interaction between people and goods by extension requires an understanding of social and cultural capital, and material objects as gifts, items of exchange or commodities as part of the contemporary value system (Sahlins, 1974). Although the influence of media on "behavioural motivation and individual action … managing familial and social relationships, not merely self-centered acquisitiveness" (Trentmann, 2004, p. 377), shaped the thread *context*, material culture, consumption and the determination of value emerged as a core component of the thread *having.*

Marketing dream space

Commoditisation of the lifestyle dream

The word lifestyle[111] is used prolifically in advertisements and other forms of marketing, suggesting a bankable value to the media and a powerful relationship with consumption. Lifestyle in media hints at something desirable, something to acquire, a mirage of perfection, order, harmony and balance in a quotidian domestic landscape of disorder and disruption; the word appears as marketable as the associated images. The mirage, transmitted through a portal of material culture,[112] is projected as a fictional place where wants and needs are more than satisfied.

Participant media samples, infused with references to the word lifestyle and saturated with consumer-focused material, challenged homeowners to engage with notions of *the good life* as consumers of products as well as of ideas. Although

[110] The importance of consumption and the centrality of objects in peoples lives was formally recognised in 1976 by UNESCO, reported "cultural property is a basic element of people's identity and 'being depends on having'" (Rowlands, 2002, p. 127).
[111] Also written as LifeStyle, life-style or even life&style.
[112] For example, television, online and print (such as magazines and newspapers).

seeking personal transformation has intrinsic value to an individuals' sense of well-being, enticing people to improve their home has greater economic value in contemporary society "where the sale of experiences and lifestyles is essential for the economy" (Kvale, 2007, p. 7). Resources contained countless examples of product-oriented solutions to the *problems* of living, such as a lack of time to clean or tidy, unbridled clutter, and entertaining to impress (Lewis, 2008).

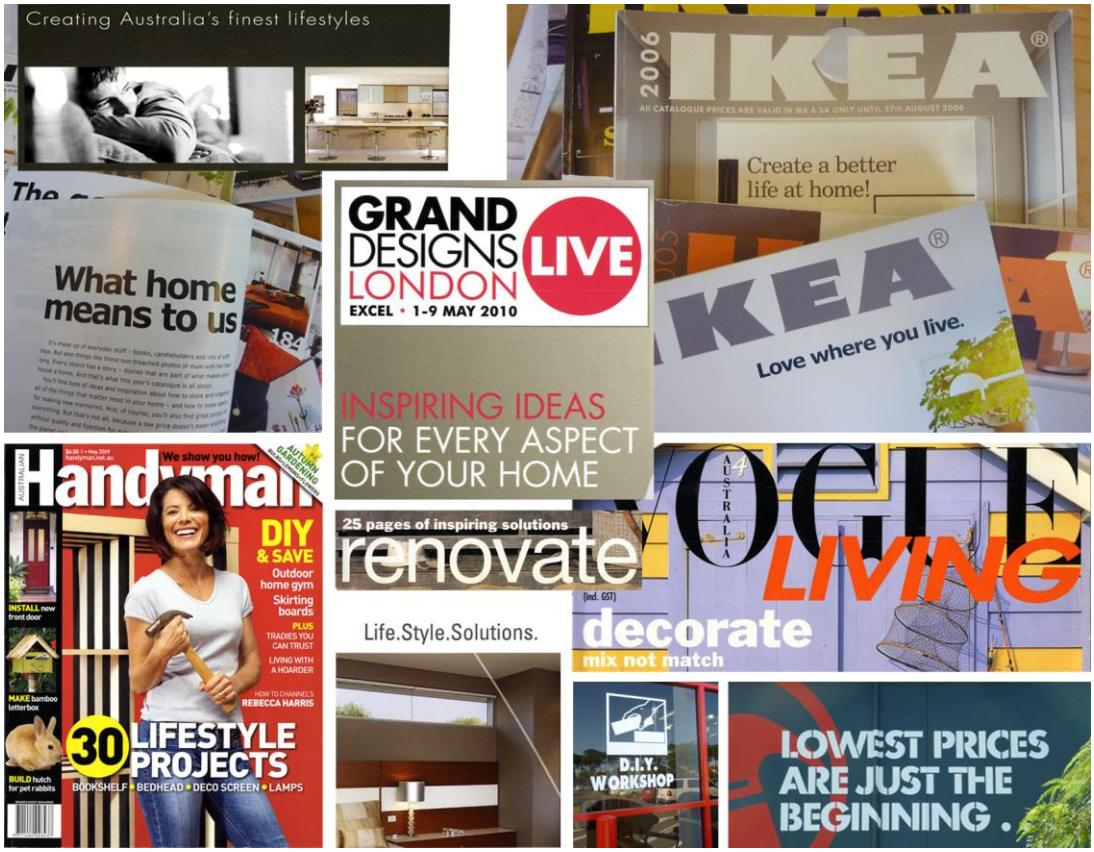


Figure 3.5: Building-oriented retail marketing opportunities to create an ideal home

Curiously, media images hinting at a perfect life are frequently devoid of real life. Signs of domestic activity and occupation are often absent from *designer* homes in glossy magazines or show homes — no mess, muddle, dirt or stale smells. By implication, the house delivering a better lifestyle requires no cleaning, housework, filing of paperwork, laundry, or inhabitants to feed or dress; restrictions on time are lifted and there is a sense of freedom, control and calm. Popular television programmes such as Grand Designs (GD) and Build a New Life, for example, communicate the dramatic, and entertaining, gulf between extreme states—before

and after (usually *expert*) intervention. They chart the transformation of the homeowner as well as the home, reducing the designers role to the:

> Transfer [of] information based on the personalities and tastes of the participants into an interior that reflects these dimensions. The format … [typical] from the 1980s onwards whereby that which we consume says something about who we are or aspire to be. (Powell, 2009, p. 98)

Easy access to so-called expert advice and availability of services, products and materials via magazines and on home and garden shows, makes it possible for individuals to connect with the *media's* version of the lifestyle dream and apparent feasibility of lifestyle transformation (Figure 3.5). The television offers a portal into other homes and other lives. Individuals, couples and families simultaneously and actively engage with programme content, with their immediate surroundings, with other members of the family and with their thoughts, dreams and desires (A. Hill, 2005; Morely, 1999).

Lifestyle television

Currently, the most dominant use of lifestyle,[113] when considered together with transformative behaviour and anticipation of improved outcomes, is by a genre known as *lifestyle television*. Lifestyle programmes were established in the mid 1940s on British television, Australia following suit over two decades later introducing home and garden makeover shows that:

> Teach one to be reflexive about the rights and wrongs of action, in the name of creating a coherent lifestyle capable of satisfying the individual's expressed needs.… Makeovers project a kind of 'examined life' …. To be on a show is to admit one has deficiencies that one cannot fully overcome, but can at least identify. The examination of the person's lifestyle that follows generates the feedback about their condition that is necessary for them to change. If the end is transformation, the means is a process of self-reflection enabled by interactions with those around them. (Redden, 2008, p. 486)

By the late 1980s and 1990s, lifestyle, as a way of constructing personal identity, had become widely accepted in media and inextricably linked to consumer culture,

[113] Other than associations to behaviour and health such as with 'healthy' or 'unhealthy' lifestyles.

especially domestic practices and leisure pursuits such as gardening, DIY, interior design and home decoration. According to Tania Lewis, the focus of popular media in recent years has been on educating their audiences about lifestyle practices, resulting in the "proliferation of [lifestyle] experts" (2008, p. 2). However, De Solier notes there is no clear evidence that lifestyle television teaches viewers *how* to live, in spite of academic claims to the contrary, rather that programmes entertain and provide instruction,[114] "commonly address[ing] their audience as customers or consumers" (2008, p. 69):

> As lifestyles themselves are increasingly based around commodified forms of leisure, television plays a crucial role in mediating consumer culture … a relatively low-production cost, moving-image medium that is particularly suited to representing ways of life as spectacle. (Redden, 2008, p. 490)

With the 'lifestyles of the rich and famous'[115] broadcast into living rooms all over the country, many Australians are subject to the temptations and aspirations of a material culture beyond their means. Television, pervasive and persuasive, has been called "the central apparatus of the consumer society; it promotes not just products, but a culture in which products have value" (Cashmore, 1994, p. 80). The promise of a better life comes packaged with anything from beauty products to luxury goods, from cars to insurance, from clothes to furniture.[116] A multi-media enhanced flood of consumer focused information surges at us in our homes telling us how to live, what to buy and what we *need*.

The search *for* a better life may be equally about addressing the fear of being left behind,[117] feeling redundant, appearing out of touch with popular culture, political, economic and social expectations (Lewis, 2007). Although the shifting sands of wants and needs are energised by human insecurities and media pressure to remain

[114] As a hybrid of entertainment and information, this genre is known as 'infotainment' (Powell, 2009).
[115] Title of song by group Good Charlotte, 2002, the prevalence of lifestyle in popular media extending to music lyrics.
[116] For example, an advertisement for Harvey Norman Store, televised on Channel Seven 23rd September 2010, declared it is "time to freshen up your home and your lifestyle with new season furniture".
[117] This is discussed in the context of participant Signal who reported a fear of appearing old as a reflection of her aging home, refer section 4.2.

up-to-date, and retail markets feed consumers insatiable appetites for improvement (of self and home), then our culture of aspiration-focused consumption appears set to continue (Cornwall & Drennan, 2004; Crocker & Linden, 1977).

Selling dreams: The Great Australian Dream

Study participants have made their homes in suburban and urban societies within developed countries; environments shaped by the dominant economic, political and geographic context beyond their control and broadly delineating their life chances. Although one component of lifestyle may be anchored in the structure of society, the other appears largely subject to individual determination, life choice. The home, a physical threshold between public and private space is, according to Marsh, one of the most visible signifiers of personal choice, "a public testament of our lifestyle" (1990, p. 6).

Real estate agents and others dealing with land and property as commodities understand the symbolic power embedded in the choice of home. Others can observe and assess your area and your street, the way your house looks, the size, the age, how well it is maintained, the colour of external paintwork, even the cars parked at the front regardless of who they belong to. One of the strongest outward markers of socio-economic positioning appears to be the choice of suburb, with land values strongly linked to affluence and appeal. Cultural choices of homeownership partly relate to differences in taste, but more significantly, indicate class-related differences in perceived value and the domination of *legitimate* cultural codes. These codes create a type of property oriented *cultural capital* evidenced through economic, social, political and cultural systems driving individual aspiration (Bennett et al., 1999; Bourdieu, 1984).

Erving Goffman extends on outward markers to include the presentation of self as "socialized, moulded, and modified to fit in with the understanding and expectations of … society" (1969, p. 44). If style and location of a house can

represent the occupier, or "the maintenance of front", then the desire for (upward) social mobility, aspiration, class and prestige may well be manifest in a 'Mc Mansion'. A large house in the right suburb appears to be the epitome of the Great Australian Dream, a visible status symbol of success "through which material wealth is expressed" (Goffman, 1969, p. 46).

Dream homes for sale

The real estate industry thrives on cultural capital linked with location, their marketing profiles focus on area before property to a much greater extent than any other business linked with the home (Figure 3.6[118]). In this consumption-focused arena the connection between an ideal life and a dream home is most prevalent, tied closely with trend cycles in location, goods, technology and even patterns of social behaviour such as entertaining.

Although the glossy home magazines mostly promote bespoke homes designed by architects, amounting to less than five percent of new homes in Australia, the vast majority of new houses are basic mass-produced outputs of developer production lines (Morris, 2006). Findings of a UK study on working class consumption in new suburban estates shows a similar growth in developer homes and *materially-based lifestyles* connected with home ownership since the interwar period:

> Developers' marketing initiatives … have both increased the perceived accessibility of owner-occupation and made it more desirable, by emphasising its associations with new, suburbanised, aspirational lifestyles. Meanwhile developers pioneered a number of sophisticated marketing techniques, including portraying estate visits as a leisure activity and `lifestyle-marketing' that attached specific social values to owner-occupation and suburban living. (Scott, 1938, p. 10)

The sales pitch for both new and established homes closely echoes the style of the product advertising in magazines for luxurious fittings, lavish furnishings, new

[118] The selection of adverts has been taken from the community newspapers delivered to one participant's household over two-week period in 2014. Reference to 'the dream' includes design and lifestyle terms. Sources: The Busselton Dunsborough Times Friday May 16, 2014, Busselton-Dunsborough Mail Wednesday May 7, 2014, and Cape-to-Cape Domain, Wednesday May 14, 2014.

appliances and gourmet kitchens.[119]

Figure 3.6: Typical real estate adverts using 'lifestyle', 'designer' or 'dream homes'.

[119] Whether the cohort of participants is susceptible to marketing pressure appears to depend upon constantly changing factors including their life stage, financial situation, work and family commitments, availability of time and motivation to change the status quo. Refer chapter 4.

The link between home, media, consumption and lifestyle warranted investigation in the thread *having*, especially considering a future of increasing primary resource limitations and environmental consciousness.[120] Understanding how and why the concept of lifestyle is given shape through mass media, how it is interpreted, internalised *personally*, and externalised *materially* by individuals in pursuit of their dreams is a powerful indicator of the interplay between life chance and life choice.

3.4 Dreamspace(s)

Domestic buildings satisfy our basic need for shelter and safety, and form the physical centre of our social and cultural world, the sphere within which our family and community satisfy the need to belong. Higher level needs[121] addressing issues such as self-esteem, authenticity, aesthetics, competence, achievement and cognitive understanding, are also tied with our sense of self-place, especially in countries with high rates of home ownership including the UK and Australia. This section reflects on home, not as a commodity or media construct, but as the physical and emotional site of change and (DIY) practice, in both senses home is still a space of aspirations, dreams and ideals.

Home

Home has been the classroom where many participants acquired their handyman skills, often the parental home, and later the place where *how to* books have gathered, ideas magazines pilled up, tools and materials collected. In formative years, participants' homemaking exploits helped establish their adult identities as couples and parents, creating a "lifespace … [that] protects and encourages the fullest development of each individual potentialities" (Faulkner & Faulkner, 1975, p. 3).

[120] Unsustainable lifestyles are briefly discussed in chapters 1 and 6; however, detailed discussion is beyond the scope of this thesis.
[121] After Maslow's theory discussed later in this section, refer Figure 3.7.

Academic research on home and home life has almost always been an integral part of archaeology, anthropology and ethnographic enquiry, with a considerable volume of both academic and descriptive material on the nature of the home:

- as *a route* to social and cultural analysis (see for example, Bourdieu, 1989a; Gilman, 1972; St. Marie, 1973),
- as *a warehouse* of personal and sensory experience (Noble, 2002; Woodward, 2003),
- as *a site* of consumption (for example, Clarke, 1999; Hurdley, 2006; Madigan & Munro, 1996), and
- as *the backdrop* to the lives of inhabitants and their objects (Miller, 2010).

According to Miller, however, television and the Internet have brought home and home possessions to the forefront of daily life. Homemaking has become an integral "mode of expression, a means by which people constructed themselves and ideologies" (2001, p. 10), linking home with personal expression and transformation, and as the context for creative practices such as DIY that has the potential for shaping lifestyle.

Tony Chapman highlights the sociological significance of *images* of the ideal home, and thus an ideal life or lifestyle, as part of a pre-meditated influence on cultural change (Chapman & Hockey, 1999; Dovey, 1994). The process of *renewal,*[122] the "active making and re-making of both humans and non-humans" (Head & Muir, 2006, p. 505), is inherently iterative and imbued with social meaning.[123] Building on this, Bhatti foregrounds the garden as an important frame of reference on cultural, social and individual meanings. As an extension of the home, Bhatti describes gardens as "artefactual … creations of human activity" that involve considerable investment in time[124], thought[125] and money[126], so much so that they are critical to an understanding of "social identities and home making"(1999, p. 184).

[122] Relating to home and garden improvement.
[123] Renovation/home improvement is frequently reductive as well as additive.
[124] For example, generative activities, skill development and creative practices.

Furthermore, Helga Dittmar, in considering the centrality of home as an "identity shell" and site of significant consumerism, reflects on the use of "possessions for defining, extending and evaluating self" (2008, p. 30). Dittmar, like Shove in *The Design of Everyday Life* (2007), addresses the significance of material objects, such as tools and the materials they are made of, in generating the *future* self. This positions the home as the site of personal expression and transformation *through* engaging in DIY, and ultimately as the locus of our contemporary unsustainable lifestyles.

When configuring the internal environment, homeowners react to external issues, some quite directly,[127] and others that are more indirect and insidious, such as the social, cultural and media pressures leading to consumption creep (Lury, 1996; Savage et al., 2001). Popular imagination stimulated by the media, holds a colourful mask to reality, feeding an insatiable desire for the fresh and new; meanwhile creeping aspiration fuels the search for a better lifestyle and keeps *wanting* and *having* out of step (Belk, 1995; Clarke, 2001)(Figure 3.9).

Model of housing needs

The human drive for change and the activities emerging from the need to *make home* are complex and dynamic. The pursuit of a better way of living is as much psychological as physiological; both are inherently connected with the twin aspects of motivation, and human needs or wants. According to psychologist Abraham Maslow, human needs are relatively fluid, generally progressive and perpetually fed by motivation, "understood to be a channel through which many basic needs may be expressed or satisfied. Typically an act has *more* that one motivation" (1943, 370, emphasis in the original).

[125] For example, ideas, attitudes, knowledge and experiences.
[126] Thus implications of consumption and production.
[127] For example, insulating themselves from local crime by installing security screens, alarm systems, high fences and lockable gates.

Maslow's iconic model[128] illustrates his motivational theory, where need exists in a prepotent hierarchy—one that is based on or influence, one level of need satisfied before moving up to the next level (Figure 3.7[129]). It is at the highest level that a true sense of balance, well-being and self-fulfillment is thought possible (Huitt, 2007). Achieving this peak experience, either momentarily or periodically, is to have reached self-transcendence and self-actualization, and perhaps to have found meaning and purpose in life, tapping into our deepest human values (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; Frankl, 1966).

Moving up the hierarchy, the four stages that Maslow terms *deficiency* needs reflect the human desire for continual improvement. This *metamotivation*, according to Maslow, is an innate human quality:

> Man is a perpetually wanting animal. Ordinarily the satisfaction of these wants is not altogether mutually exclusive, but only tends to be. The average member of our society is most often partially satisfied and partially unsatisfied in all of his wants. (1943, p. 395)

This restlessness, when manifest through home improvement is sufficient to maintain building industry and retail markets, either at the commercial scale with construction services or through amateur DIY retail. In capitalist societies where safety and security are now taken for granted,[130] the lack of satisfaction with aspects of home and domestic life emerges in the mechanical changes made to a home, and the changes it signifies, or hopes to signify, in people's socio-economic status (Biressi & Nunn, 2008). It is this aspect of the *dreamspace* that renders the home a commodity, and reflects dreams of economic rather than personal or experiential gain. Although these are identifiable elements of contemporary aspiration, it is the non-economic desires that prove the most illusive to attain.

Design psychologist Toby Israel, adapting Maslow's model, created a pyramid of *housing needs*, where *home as self-actualization* can be reached once other levels

[128] The diagrammatic representation of Maslow's 'hierarchy of needs' as a pyramid of layers has been articulated in many versions since1954, but was never presented as a diagram by Maslow himself.
[129] Adapted from: Maslow (1954) and Huitt (2007).
[130] In other words, the majority are able to move beyond satisfying basic housing needs.

are achieved (Figure 3.8[131]). Where Maslow describes the self-actualized person having the "capacity to appreciate, again and again, freshly and naively, the basic good life, with awe, pleasure, wonder and even ecstasy" (1954, p. 163); Israel describes the self-actualized home as somewhere that meets all our *place* oriented requirements plus deeper existential needs. In other words, an individual's vision for an ideal home most likely embraces the qualities they desire in their ultimate *self-place* (2003).

Although these models provide a useful framework for discussing the findings in relation to human motivation for improvement, both are misleading in a number of ways. Firstly, they imply a hierarchy pattern or sequence that is both clearly divided into stages and progressive, requiring movement in a linear direction—up. Secondly, they present an overly generalised theory of motivation, implying everyone is either satisfied or dissatisfied by similar categories of needs. Although participants in this study share similar socio-economic backgrounds, they do not have identical cultural backgrounds or experiences, and this study challenges the notion that they have the same housing or human needs as modelled. Thirdly, these models indicate that people will only experience self-actualization on reaching the top, whereas others have observed that self-actualization may emerge through activity itself rather than reaching a goal (Csikszentmihalyi, 1996; Morris, 2006):

> A true sense of home, and the security that comes with it, is created by our expressive activity – our personal stamp. Through our personal involvement we shape the immediate environments we inhabit. (Marsh, 1990, p. 6)

Finally, the models focus on proactive human behaviour, on taking action to meet pre-configured needs, including food, shelter and independence. In making changes to self or home in order to gain greater self-fulfillment, the motivation to

[131] Adapted from: Israel (2003, p. 56).

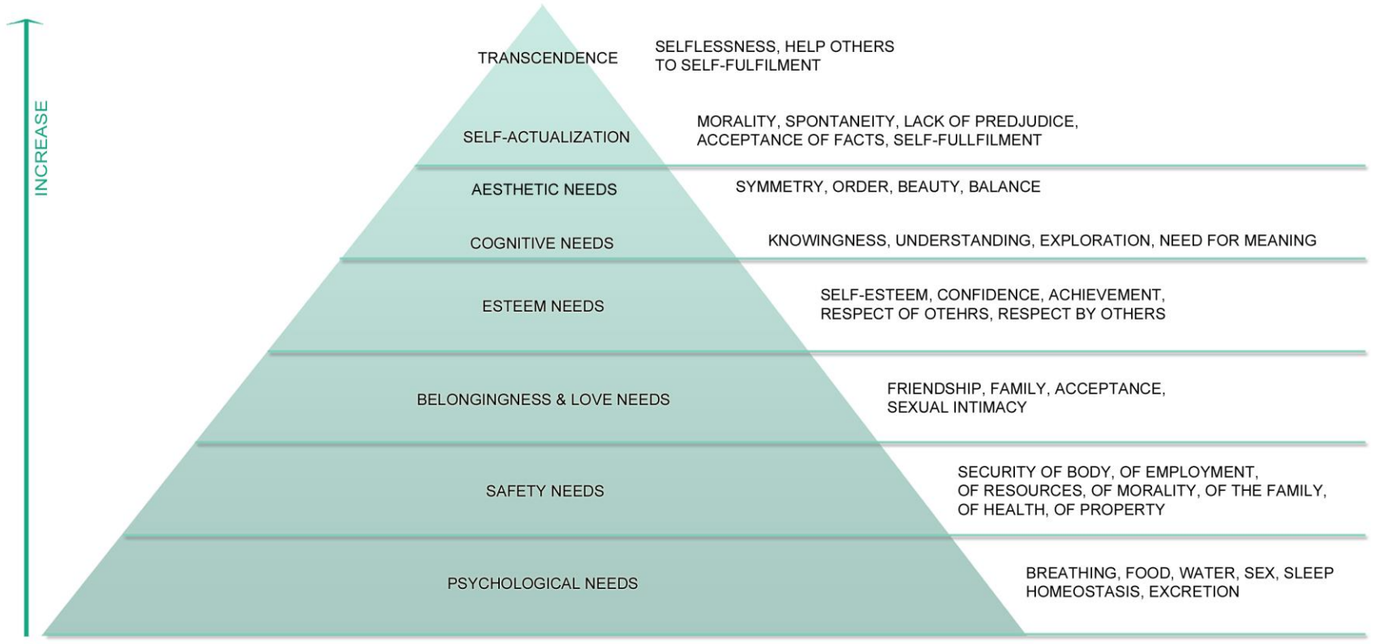


Figure 3.7:
Pyramid of human needs adapted from Maslow (1954)

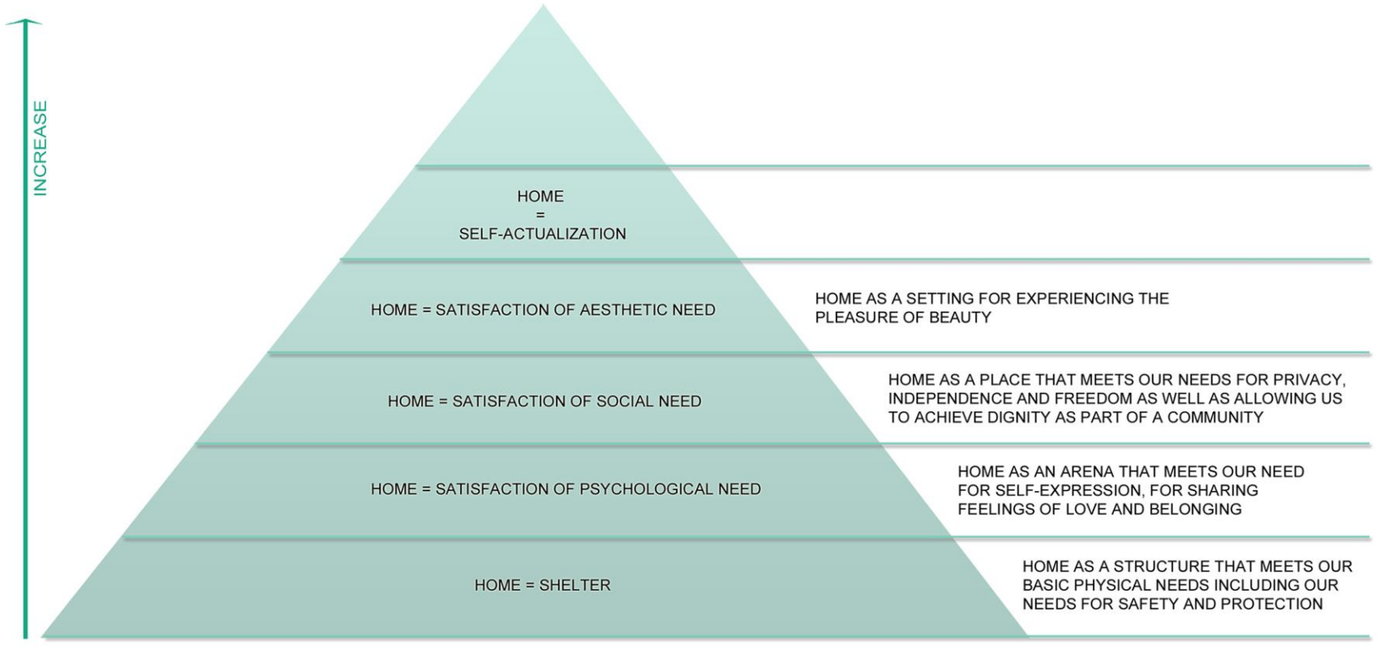


Figure 3.8:
Pyramid of housing needs adapted from Israel (2003, 56)

meet needs, and wants, is tempered by many other things, including a person's skills and ability, resources, opportunity, availability, clarity of vision, creativity, changing technologies, and the input of others. Home, then, both real and imaginary, provides for our basic deficiency needs and also our self-place dreams. The physical and psychological home is not only where we negotiate the rituals and necessities of daily life, but also the focus of continual change, where practices that lead to self and place transformation converge.

3.5 Constructing and realising the dream

This section reflects on engagement with DIY as an activity directed towards realising dreams of a better life. Regardless of whether the outcome of DIY matches with the dream, and exceeds or falls short of expectations, DIY enables people to express their life choice,[132] and/or seek to improve their life chance[133]. Practices leading to physical and personal transformation are also linked with the generation of new experiences, challenges, skills and collaborations, and opportunities for creativity.

Home renovation as a set of practices

Informing on practice (design, having, doing)

Various approaches to understanding practice were introduced in chapter 1, recognizing practice theory and theory of practices as interchangeable terms identifying a body of work taking a *practice approach* to subject matter. Ropke's approach, for example, is:

> Based on the idea that in the continual flow of activities it is possible to identify clusters or blocks of activities where coordination and interdependence make it meaningful for practitioners to conceive of them as entities, … a set of interconnected doings and sayings. (2009, p. 2491)

[132] DIY is a self-directed activity; individual choice directs the utilisation of resources and involvement of others.
[133] For many, DIY home renovation is a way to save money, specifically saving on the cost of labour/contractors, and to increase the value of real estate. The home as a commodity has been discussed in section 3.4.

Practice theory facilitated investigation of DIY as a social and material practice anchored in material culture and consumption. Practices identified in this study, both individually and blended, are recognized as threads and as approaches to activity[134] contributing to the everyday ways of living.

Grounded in sociology, the practice theory approach contributes to an understanding of domestic practices, both as historically recognised activities such as home improvement, interior design or architecture, and as reproductions of an established practice, modified through repetition and adaptation. Schatzki refers to the former as *practice-as-entity* and the latter as *practice-as-performance,* identifying people as *carriers* and *performers* of practice (1996). Schatzki's categories of practice imply that individuals comprehend the essential aspects of an activity, or set of activities, and have the ability to modify the activity to suit their own resources, abilities and goals.

Ropke acknowledges Schatzki's determination that practice is *materially mediated* arguing, "people use artefacts to shape the connections that make a practice into an entity" (2009, p. 2492). However, the extent to which mediation occurs may depend on the nature of the activity or set of activities and the specific situation. Exchanged interior design ideas or *how to* renovation instructions over a formal dinner resides within the social and cultural practice of entertaining, rather than an instance of performance practice such as DIY activity, where "objects, equipment and bodies (or body parts) are involved" (ibid.).

To Reckwitz the mental and physical input of the practitioner is an essential part of practice, with artefacts essential to the entity itself, thus:

> A 'practice' ... is a routinized type of behaviour which consists of … bodily activities, forms of mental activities, 'things' and their use, a background knowledge in the form of understanding, know-how, states of emotion and motivational knowledge. (2002, pp. 249-50)

[134] The design *with* anthropology frame identified having (consumption) and doing (DIY), making and production as *use* practices, and design process as an integral part of *design* practice. Refer section 1.1.

This research explores these elements of change-making behaviour, including what motivates and influences the DIY practitioner. Bodily engagement in DIY activity requires skill, competence and dexterity, and also an appreciation of process, both in *doing* (making and producing through building) and in *design* (Watson & Shove, 2008). The separation of the *how to* knowledge between the design and build stages of home improvement practice forms part of the second research question,[135] addressed in part by the case study following the practice of three individuals.[136]

Although design practice and DIY are often individual pursuits or comprise individual activities such as reading instruction manuals or making concrete formwork, mostly they involve the interplay of thoughts, comments and bodily actions of *more than one person* within a wider system (Ortner, 1999). Many contemporary realms of activity such as DIY are complex or *integrative practices* frequently involving other *dispersed* practices such as generalised communication, typically reading and writing, and almost always involve some aspect of consumption (Schatzki, 1996). Warde suggests that "practices rather than individual desires create wants" (2005, p. 137); countering the alternative position that consumption occurs as a *result* of desires outside of a social or culturally situated practice of some kind.

In consolidating the connection between consumption and practice, *having* and *doing* and/or *design*, Warde highlights the integrated and *boundless* nature of one within the other, "wants are fulfilled only in practice, their satisfaction attributable to effective practical performances" (2005, p. 142). In doing so, Warde foregrounds the integrated nature of person and performance, through competence, comprehension, interpretations, attitudes, motivation and the extent of involvement. Theories of practice applied to this study then acknowledge the layers of mental and physical input, the social and cultural nature of activity, the

[135] RQ2: Is there a difference in the way designers and non-designers conceptualise, plan and realise their projects? For sub-questions, refer Section 1.1.
[136] One DIY practitioner skilled at both doing *and* design, one DIY practitioner skilled at design, and one DIY practitioner with neither design or build skills, knowledge or experience.

development of skill and understanding, appropriation and consumption, motivations and influence, and the role of mediating objects or materials (Bourdieu, 1984; Giddens, 1991).

DIY practice as craft consumption

DIY home renovation then is both a social *and* material practice, with *making* activities clearly negotiating relationships between people and things such as tools, materials and the built form (Ingold, 2012). DIY can further be considered a method of self-determination or life choice, intent on "transformation – the interwoven fluidity of material culture and social life" (Colloredo-Mansfield, 2003, p. 245).

As a practice engaging with artefacts and resources, DIY has been already been introduced as a form of participatory consumption, refer section 3.5. Additionally, in mapping the *complex hybrid relations* created by the overlapping threads of the research inquiry concept, the study draws on notions explored through material culture and consumption that made "new bodily practices necessary, [and] prescribed new programmes of action" (Olsen, 2010, p. 99). Colin Campbell identifies one of these as *craft consumption*, where the actions of a DIY enthusiast are typified by collecting commodities and "the construction of assemblages" (2005, p. 34).

Campbell further acknowledges the role design; skill and competence play in the consumption of tools, materials and services in the process of making or modifying objects, or in this study, the home:

> Many … want to be able to use products in more and more expressive and creative ways; that is, they want to be able to 'realize their potential' and 'express their true selves' by means of consumer 'props'. (2005, p. 40)

To Campbell (1992) and Warde (2010) almost all practices comprising aspects of material culture involve consumption at some level, either "of purchase … [or] of using-up" (Warde, 2005, p. 137), or both, engaging with acquisition, appropriation and appreciation (Shove & Pantzar, 2005). As such, Shove, Warde and Campbell, amongst others, add weight to the Sobel's notion that consumption results from

(life) choices made by an individual, as producer in the process and practice of constructing their lifestyle:

> We need to learn how to balance consumptive behaviour and lifestyles with more creative and convivial lifestyles.… People have dreams for how they want to life and what is important in life … [they] are choosing experiences over stuff. (Sanders & Stappers, 2012, p. 8)

Taken as a form of craft consumption (Campbell, 2005) and serious leisure activity (Stebbins, 2007), DIY contributes strongly to participant ways of living, both for the creativity it accommodates and access to continual transformation it facilitates. As a "democratizing agency" (Atkinson, 2006, p. 5), and way of living *with* change, DIY opens new avenues for exploration by the design profession that embraces connections between creative practice, transformation activity and lifestyle.

DIY and value opportunities

Studies by Elizabeth Shove and her colleagues identify DIY as an important and unexplored area of consumption and practice, as outlined in section 1.2. Shove utilises case studies and interviews with consumers to illustrate how everyday artefacts, and the "diverse (and often uncoordinated) accumulation of objects" (2007, p. 2) in the home both inform the user and are applied in DIY practice:

> DIY allows us to investigate the characteristics and qualities of specific combinations of skill and consumer goods involved in accomplishing projects. As a result, practitioners' 'careers' – both individually and collectively – determine related forms and types of production and consumption. (Watson & Shove, 2008, p. 4)

According to Shove, DIY tools, decoration materials and hardware contribute to an *image of having*, purchases promising changed outcomes, and yet *having* alone does not necessarily guarantee new practices or future *doing*. While collecting things in preparation for action—magazine image cuttings, notes/ideas, advice, tools and materials—cannot not by itself generate new outcomes, the planning indicates restlessness and desire for change. In chapter 4, some participant interviews highlight the pleasure of imagining the altered state (goal) and others of

imaging the journey (activity); regardless of outcome value can be found in projecting ahead.[137]

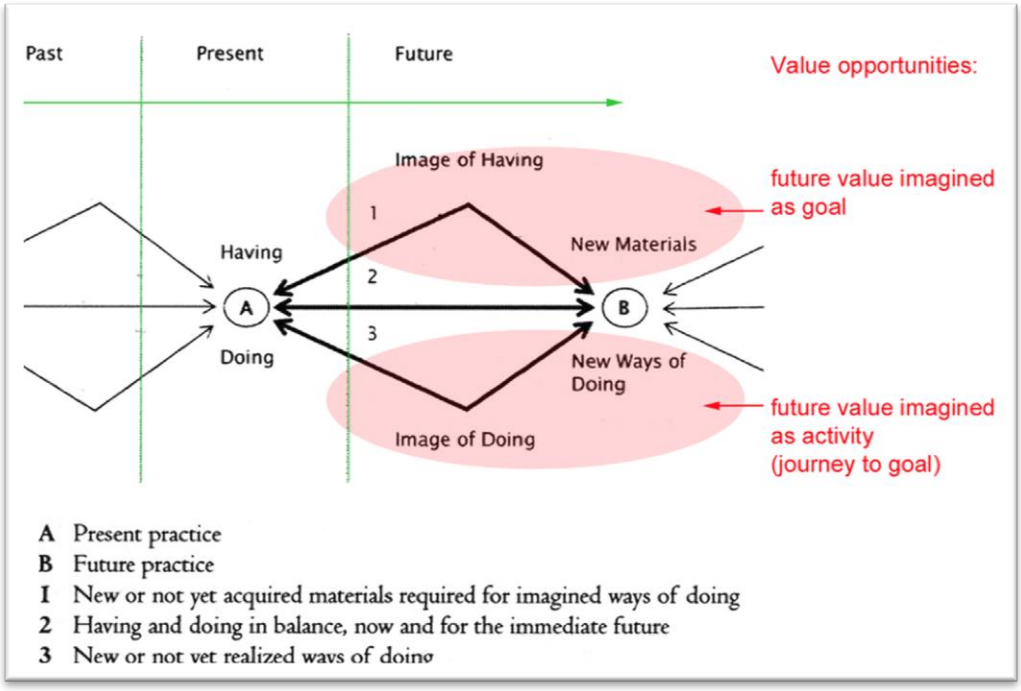


Figure 3.9: Consumption practices – having and doing

Figure 3.9[138] models Shove's three possible paths between current and future practice; one requiring new materials or things, one requiring different ways of doing, and a position of relative balance. The diagram over-simplifies the complexity acknowledged in the analysis of findings, where, for example:

> Kitchen practices are organised by, through, and around a physical landscape of material possibilities … [with] an enduring connection between 'doing' and the appropriation of specific artefacts and of kitchen spaces *as a whole*" (2007, p. 37, emphasis in the original).

In this study, as for Shove's research, DIY specifically relates to making home repairs or improvements such as decorating, a popular basic form of craft consumption.[139] Ironically, alternative branches of DIY culture, notably the emergence of the *punk*

[137] In chapter 3, this future projection has been referred to in the context of a dreamscape.
[138] Adapted from: Shove (2007, p. 36), Figure 3 'The dynamics of having and doing'. This concept/diagram is revisited and remodelled in chapter 4 (refer Figure 4.64).
[139] Decorating is a consumption activity that has been increasing around eight percent per year for two decades in the UK and is worth the equivalent of AUD $18.7 billion per annum (Mintel International Group Ltd., 2005).

subculture in the 1970s, reject rather than contribute to materialism, consumption and mass production. The DIY ethic endorsed by the punk movement espouses the benefits of *simple living*, promoting self-sufficiency through reclaiming, recycling, repairing, re-crafting, growing food and frugality.[140] In effect the two interpretations of DIY as *doing* and *having* are thus opposed, the DIY ethic as anti-consumerist and pro-sustainable living, whereas DIY industry is tightly locked into consumer culture and the experience economy.

The experience economy

According to John Sherry, anthropologists have long embraced the notion of an *experience economy*, but only relatively recently have those involved in marketing, and advertising recognized it's potential. Sherry references commentators on consumption such as McCracken, Appadurai and Gottdiener, warning "the technologies of influence that undergird consumer culture" are so powerful and pervasive that the marketing and advertising industries will soon "not merely shape our experience, they will determine it, providing it to us prepackaged and, effectively, preconsumed" (2002, p. vii).

As previously discussed, the media plays a significant role in encouraging the public to adopt patterns of maximising/optimising behaviour, to expect the best, biggest, ideal, most luxurious. The DIY industry provides for degrees of self-sufficiency, yet the "logical impossibility of a decision maker being able to identify an optimal choice" (Earl, 1986, p. 9); means an individual will nearly always fall short of a self-defined aspiration. Thus, by *expecting* a positive experience and successful outcome, the DIY practitioner may be drawn into a cycle of over-anticipation and under-performance, of *having* and *doing*, only to repeat the process hoping for a better outcome next time, or when new products *promise* better results. According to Sherry:

> As rapidly as selves morph, so does the stuff of marketplace behaviour. Marketers introduce artefacts and meanings into the environment, which

[140] In relation to these characteristics, there are clear links with the sub-group LOVOS as discussed in section 3.2.

> consumers appropriate, transmute, and nativize to suit local desires. Marketers in turn reappropriate and countertransmute these local adaptations and resistances, sending the wheel spinning once again. For better or worse, marketing and consumption are among the most potent forces of cultural change and cultural stability at work in the world today. (2002, p. viii)

Critically, Sherry's observation about the power of media has implications not only for cycles of housing fabric renewal, but on the role of design in the marketing industries, on the perception of lifestyle as a commodity, and on the active role of individuals:

> Consumption is an active process, literally produced by consumers-cum-*bricoleurs* … [where] consumption is cocreated by marketers and consumers. Marketers provide the tasserae from which consumers compose the mosaics of lifestyles, although in a postmodern climate … even recognizing consumers' penchant for recutting and altering the hues of these very stones – grows increasingly anachronistic. (2002, p. viii, emphasis in the original)

Sherry endorses the broadening of disciplinary horizons to shift consumer value, suggesting applied anthropology, culture and design together are better placed than other fields to investigate consumption activities, lifestyle mosaics, and creative practices such as DIY.

Alternative value systems

Although transforming the home through DIY is an experience tightly bound with monetary investment,[141] the study data reveals a strong link between *doing* and human relations where people *freely* offer time, materials, tools and advice, to which end *having* can be interpreted in a non-economic context. In cultural anthropology this is known as *reciprocity;* a type of informal economy of exchange often between family members, and based on trust, generosity and shared interests.

[141] Not only relating to the ownership of home that is frequently a precursor for renovation, but also the investment in tools and materials, and the payment of fees for utilities (power to operate tools) and even regulatory costs involved in hiring licensed contractors and making planning submissions.

Cultural anthropologist, Marshall Sahlins developed a spatial framework to demonstrate "a typology of reciprocity, according to the social distance" (Hendry, 2008, p. 64) (Figure 3.10[142]). At the centre, where the home, family and relatives or *lineage sector* are located, reciprocity is frequently generalised or unmeasured. Away from the immediate social circle, according to Sahlins, there is usually a system of trade, *balanced* or equal in perceived value.[143]

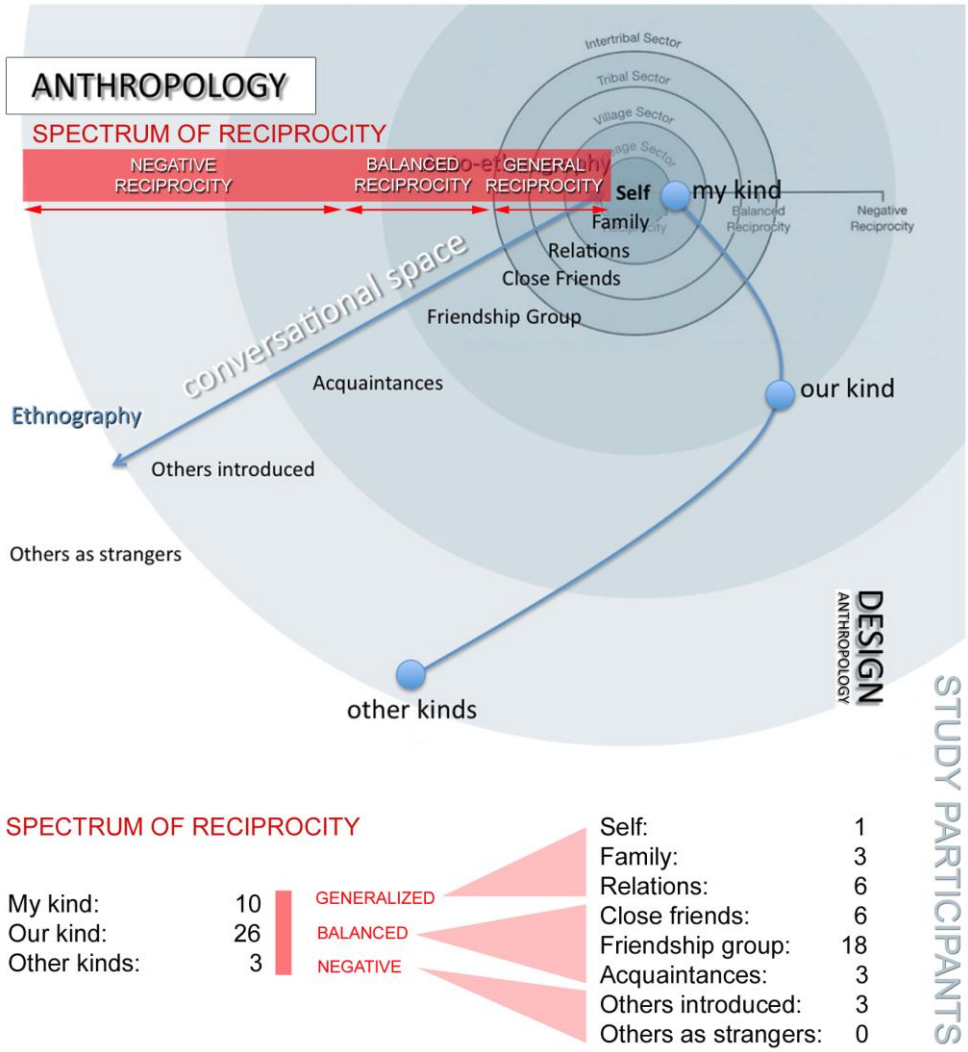


Figure 3.10: Distribution of participants located in the spectrum of reciprocity.

[142] Adapted from: Sahlins' diagram in '*An introduction to social anthropology*' by Joy Hendry (2008), p. 66, Figure 3.1.

[143] In reality the situation may be unbalanced depending on local laws, social factors, issues such as exploitation, and issues of perceived wealth and class status.

Although Sahlins' spectrum of reciprocity maps a primitive system of non-monetary exchange, dealing as it does with tribal and intertribal social structures, this model highlights value and social distance in this study. Much of what occurs in the social world of the participants can be mapped as valued exchanges without involving money, by swapping materials and contributing time. The loan of tools in temporary exchange of personal goods, demonstrates trust they will be returned, and avoidance of expenditure, in other words—without exchanging money for a resource that already exists in the social circle. This circle of generalised reciprocity is composed of *my kind* (family/relations) and *our kind* (friends/acquaintances), and encompasses almost all of the participants taking part in the research.

DIY as a transformative practice

Although Israel's model provides a basis for reflection on human needs and wants in relation to home modification (Figure 3.9), the dynamic behaviour satisfying[144] those needs is missing. Similarly, where theories of practice contribute to an understanding of lifestyle through practices of *having*, *doing* and *design*, a more contextualised focus on the "*process* of transformation within a system" (Hardman, 2005, p. 380, emphasis in the original) such as a home, is required.

DIY as a creative and transformative activity centred on the home, reflects the change-making agency of occupants and "the dynamics of process in which the transformation of the home is integral to the transformation of social relations" (Miller, 2001, p. 4). Transformation is an important theme for the study, used in both the thesis title and in response to the first research question,[145] identifying change through human intervention thus through self-determined actions,[146] specifically on the form and aesthetics of a dwelling[147]:

[144] Or attempting to satisfy, acknowledging the search for self-actualization is not always successful.
[145] RQ1: What is the relationship between design process, DIY and the construction or transformation of lifestyle? For sub-questions, refer Section 1.1.
[146] Here aspects of life choice materialise through the decision to undertake DIY, with cause and effect acknowledged.
[147] As such, transformation is integral to the *design*, *doing* and *having* threads that encompass activities intent on making improvements to the home, and further relates to *lifestyle* and *context* as threads influencing or influenced (respectively) by the desire for change.

> The shift toward reflexive individualization means that 'choice' … becomes central to people's existence as their identities are increasingly formed through lifestyle-oriented decision making.… The rise of makeover culture and the emergence of a whole new type of expert, the lifestyle expert, can be seen … inextricably linked to this reflexive, do it yourself (DIY) understanding of contemporary identity. Perhaps the most exemplary type of life specialist or lifestyle expert associated with this DIY culture is that found on 'makeover' television … makeover programs where the transformation of the self is the central concern. (Lewis, 2007, p. 287)

Transformation here is grounded in the key areas of the research field, design, anthropology and practice theory, all of which reflect on human intervention and conscious modification. Practice theory, for example, differentiates between routine and non-routine activities, and further that all aspects—the practice, the practitioner, the environment and the resources involved—can be both transformative and transformed over time, with practitioners as *carriers* of practice (Ropke, 2009). Likewise, contributors to design anthropology acknowledge makers and designers as carriers of practice(s), specifically identifying design as an agent of change and thus an integral part of a transformation event or experience (Gunn & Donovan, 2012b). Building on this, this thesis considers creative activity as distinct from routine activity and *transformational* in nature; seen in this light, DIY as a creative practice has potential to be a powerful influence on components of life choice (Figure 3.3).

Simon's much quoted "everyone designs who devises courses of action aimed at changing existing situations into preferred ones" (1996, p. 111), both expands design beyond professional boundaries to represent any purposeful decision-making process aimed at change and at once re-captures it, assigning design to the specific realm of professions. In this study, both *design* and *doing* are considered transformational practices. *Design* focuses on the transformation of ideas into conceptualised form and later into realised space; a "process driven by a vision that provides the direction towards a solution" (Rolfstam & Buur, 2012, p. 72). The use, making and production practices that characterise *doing* on the other hand, focus on the transformation of the physical home and are integral to the transformation of the self (Brunner, 1991). Through a design *with* anthropology lens (N. Smith,

2011), making, the maker and the subject of the making activity, are all individually and collectively subject to change:

> Making is always in a process of transformation, it is fluid and improvisational. Making thus gives way to using and designing as a process of *carrying on* whereby things are not actually finished.… Rather meaning is created in the making. (Gunn & Donovan, 2012a, p. 5)

Importantly here, the *making of meaning* emerges from the physical process of creating something tangible with materials; the link between meaning, transformation and constructing lifestyles is discussed in chapter 5. Further to this, the relation between using and designing is ascribed the capability of bringing "together the aspirations of the people who plan, build, organize [and] engage with changed conditions" (Gunn & Donovan, 2012b, p. 131). Participant data reveals that lives as well as homes are transformed through making, creating and production practices, and that meaning is attached to both the process as well as the outcomes of DIY projects.[148]

Transforming dreams into reality

Images of *dream homes*, mostly luxury home interiors on makeover television programmes or architecturally designed homes in magazines, fuel trends for optimisation as people set out to transform their homes (Ji Song & Wood, 2007). Although personal issues driving change are often based on improving function or comfort, messages transmitted through visually oriented media have a greater influence on transforming the appearance of the home environment:

> The huge number of home [and] decorating magazines available … are testimony to the importance others … attach to creating a home that is a setting for the enjoyment of beauty. Thus home as self-actualization must … also satisfy our basic *aesthetic* need. (Israel, 2003, p. 115)

Media messages, deliberately enticing and professionally orchestrated to achieve high standards of finish and maximum impact, inspire audiences to *more accurately*

[148] Responding to research questions: How do DIY (RQ1a) and design practices (RQ1b) influence the perception of lifestyle as something to create or manipulate? RQ1d: What are the key motivations and influences on the way people interpret lifestyle as something they can create or transform at home?

present themselves in the best case scenario; “a life with a redecorated house or a redesigned garden is presented unproblematically as a better life” (Bonner, 2008, p. 547). However, without the skills and knowledge to mimick the lifestyle experts project outcomes may fall drastically short of people’s expectations (Lewis, 2007). DIY does not always deliver complete or successful transformation when measured against media dreamscapes.

With programme agendas that determine “project ideas must look easy enough to DIY and must deliver immediate transformation” (Allon, 2008, p. 57), accounts by respondents to precedent studies report how misleading the makeover shows can be (Marsh, 1998; Peng, 2009). In reality, physical engagement with DIY activity, as a way of seeking transformation of self (skills, knowledge and expertise), may not be sufficiently rewarding to create a pattern of repeated practice. Even so, the desire for transformation of place and for social acceptance, bridging the gap between dream and real, may be strong enough for people to reject doing-it-themselves but engage others, becoming *hire renovators* (Peng, 2009).

In a contemporary society providing for most basic human needs, many are further motivated to engage in planning, coordinating and labouring during their leisure time in an effort to making changes to their personal territory. The issues behind an individual’s ascent to the next level in the hierarchy of housing needs include powerful culturally and socially situated emotions, often troublesome and always connected with transformation (Desmet, Overbeeke, & Tax, 2001).

DIY as a creative practice

DIY projects in this study focus on making new environments or features, rather than repairs and maintenance (R&M), and range from creating cabinets to entire renovations, the key requirement being that the practitioners do the work. DIY extends beyond the routine maintenance of the house, where a pre-existing feature provides the template, to provide opportunities for individual and collective creativity, and for developing the *skills* and *knowledge* to adapt homes in response to and in order to shape changing desires, wants and needs.

As a commercial industry, home renovation falls into the traditional realms of both designers and builders. In the domestic, craft oriented realm however, DIY home renovation breaks down the formal boundaries of both design and build roles, with practitioners working across both design and use practices. This section builds on motives for undertaking home improvement by asking why people engage in the activity *themselves*, and later whether they are themselves transformed as well as their way of living (Ouellette & Wood, 1998).

The DIY approach

There are many reasons why people undertake home improvement activities on a DIY basis, including practical and financial reasons. DIY also satisfies a desire for change, both *to* the aesthetics or structure of the home and *to* ways of living in the home. DIY offers practitioners the chance to escape *from* the ordinary and familiar, and *from* the quotidian routine of the everyday.

The sheer proliferation of popular literature on home improvement, renovation, remodelling and decorating, either instructive manuals or fictional works appears to indicate that DIY has become a popular and, ironically, even routine leisure activity in many countries (Nesbit, 2011). The process of finding ones own personhood as an independent and capable *creator* and maker is on the rise. The resurgence of DIY and craft industries "is a strong indicator that people are seeking ways to express their creativity" (Sanders & Stappers, 2012, pp. 16-17). One participant's magazine collection, for example, carried positive stories by *real renovators* as a regular feature, combining the power of narrative, with helpful tips, lists of merchandise and contacts, and enticing stylised images of immaculately clean uncluttered rooms (Figure 3.11[149]).

[149] Extracts are from participant resources – Paperbark (P026b). Refer also Appendix 7. The use of 'real' in the feature title series appears to acknowledge that other 'stories' or projects featured in the magazine are staged, posed, idealised or somehow 'unreal', suggesting an attempt to connect more closely (and motivate) with the audience by featuring what might be perceived as 'typical' audience members having *successfully* achieved a renovation.

Figure 3.11: Feature stories on 'real' renovators from Handyman magazine.

According to Elizabeth Shove, consumer research in the UK in 2005 found that over twenty-five percent of adults enjoyed their engagement with DIY but did not document any reasons, likewise questions such as "is it the process itself, the exercise of existing competence, the challenge of learning new skills or the satisfaction of the result?" (2007, p. 48), remained unanswered. Although market research data confirms that involvement with DIY activities is linked with "pursuing ideals, images and aspirations formed and disseminated by the mass media" (Shove, 2007, p. 49), the nature of creativity connected with the pursuit is missing.

Academic studies to date on home modification and personalisation mainly focus on the motives and outcomes rather than the activity or practice of making change, such as Daniel Miller's 1988 study of kitchen adaptations in the UK (1987). In a retail based case study in the UK looking at consumer motives, Colin Williams builds on an earlier study of DIY by Pahl (1984),[150] investigating the influence of human agency as well as economic constraints that lead to DIY. He concludes that DIY is "firmly grounded in human agency … [and] creating a home which reflects the personality, ethos and lifestyle of the owners" (2004, p. 273), but does not expand on it as a *dynamic* activity. Tim Dant refers to DIY as a "cultural industry oriented to the affordable and practical rather than luxury and glamorous" (1999, p. 77), but does not identify the *nature* of activity that transforms the shell of a house into a home.

It is Shove who acknowledges that the practice or *doing* of DIY is underrepresented in academic study, falling somewhere between traditional sociological categories of work and leisure, and missing analysis that takes into account "the active combination" (2007, p. 49) of anatomy and tools, design and use practice (as outlined in section 1.2).

[150] Study of household work practices on the Isle of Sheppey.

Design and use practices

Building on literature emerging from the field of design anthropology, there is a clear sense that design and use practices, to include making and producing (Figure 1.6), should neither be considered in isolation from each other, nor separately from the cultural, social and physical context within which they occur:

> Design anthropology does not place separate emphasis on values, or design, or experience, which are the domains of philosophy, academic design research, and psychology, respectively. Rather … focuses on the interconnecting threads among all three, requiring hybrid practices (Tunstall, 2008b).

Accounting for behavioural patterns, values, beliefs, experience and meanings as well as environmental affordances, the "objective, real, and physical … action possibilities" (J. J. Gibson, 1986, p. 129), allow for a broader set of interpretations on DIY as design *with* use practice, subsequently verified and incorporated into this study. Scheldeman suggests that the designers should not impose closure, but allow for "meaningful relation … [to be] made through use … design should not prescribe or predict, but enable" (2012, p. 64). Taking the same approach to home improvement, rather than provide *closed* outputs, such as the documentation drawings or images of finished work, but possibilities for closer relations between designers and users throughout.

Design practice traditionally has little or no overlap with use practice. Architecture, for example, focuses on the creation of an idea and an output based on the idea, usually drawings, which are *representational* of the building and *prescribe* its future use, but producing them is not the same as producing the building itself. In this scenario, there is a gap between design and use practices, between the drawing and the construction, and later the habitation. By contrast, practices within DIY activity are seen to overlap; the process of modifying three-dimensional spaces from conceptual ideas is *compressed* into a single "creative practice of making and re-making" (McFadyen, 2012, p. 110).

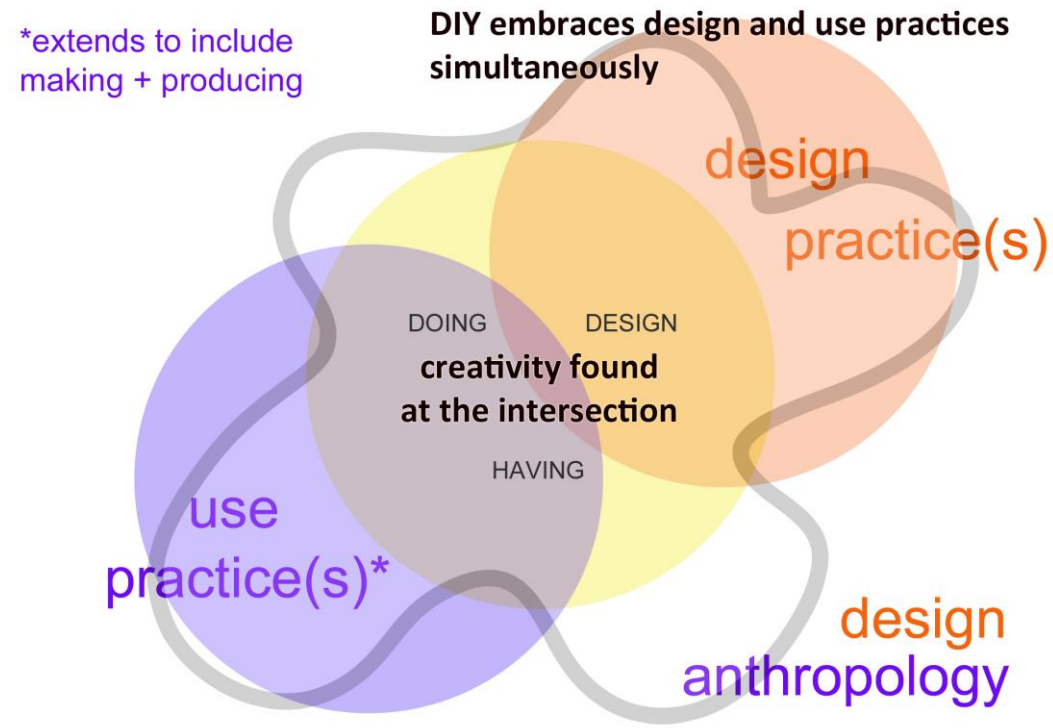


Figure 3.12: DIY and creativity located within a frame of design and anthropology

The focus on DIY as a user-oriented practice already combines creativity with production organised around user preferences and expressive activity. The study sought insights aimed at closing the gap, challenging:

> Conventional thinking regarding the nature of design and creativity in a way that acknowledges the improvisation skills and perceptual acuity of people … [and understands] the relations between designing, producing and using as skilled forms of engagement. (Gunn & Donovan, 2012b, p. xv)

In this frame,[151] the DIY practitioner is a "creative user [who] either creates a new space or gives an existing one new meanings and uses" (J. Hill, 2003, 27); thus, although DIY allows for design and use practices to operate in combination, creativity is the key component found at the intersection of the two (Figure 3.12).

[151] The design anthropology frame allows for differentiation between design and creativity through DIY, foregrounding of improvisation as a key element of creative practice as discussed later in this section.

Creativity

This section explores interpretations of creativity relevant to DIY as a *creative* practice, including aspects of the creative process, types of creativity, and conceptual models that acknowledge creativity.

The definition of creativity has been contested for many decades in many disciplines, mostly focused on the cognitive abilities of a problem solver, or the manifest solution to a problem (Sanders & Stappers, 2012). Some contributors describe creativity as an act of invention or innovation, as "a puzzle, a paradox … a mystery" (Boden, 1994, p. 75), or as a syndrome or phenomenon (Ingold & Hallam, 2007).

Of the many interpretations available and aspects explored (Figure 3.13[152]), the most appropriate to this study are those that reflect on:

(i) the psychology of creativity (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997),
(ii) the process of bringing ideas to reality (Pirsig, 1975; Runco, 2007),
(iii) the way resources are gathered and utilised (Boden, 1994; Ingold & Hallam, 2007), and
(iv) the influence of knowledge, skill and experience—both contributing to and/or restricting creative behaviour (Boden, 1994; Koestler, 1964).

This research interprets creativity as a cultural, social and psychological *process*, rather than an invention, materialised output or product (Csikszentmihalyi, 1999; Le Loarne, 2005). Creativity here *enables* a person, or group working as co-creators, to generate new ideas and outcomes, such as original or inventive home improvement projects, is situated/context-specific, requires domain-relevant skills and knowledge, and is enhanced by improvisation and motivation (Amabile, 1983).

[152] Source: Le Loarne, 2005, p. 4.

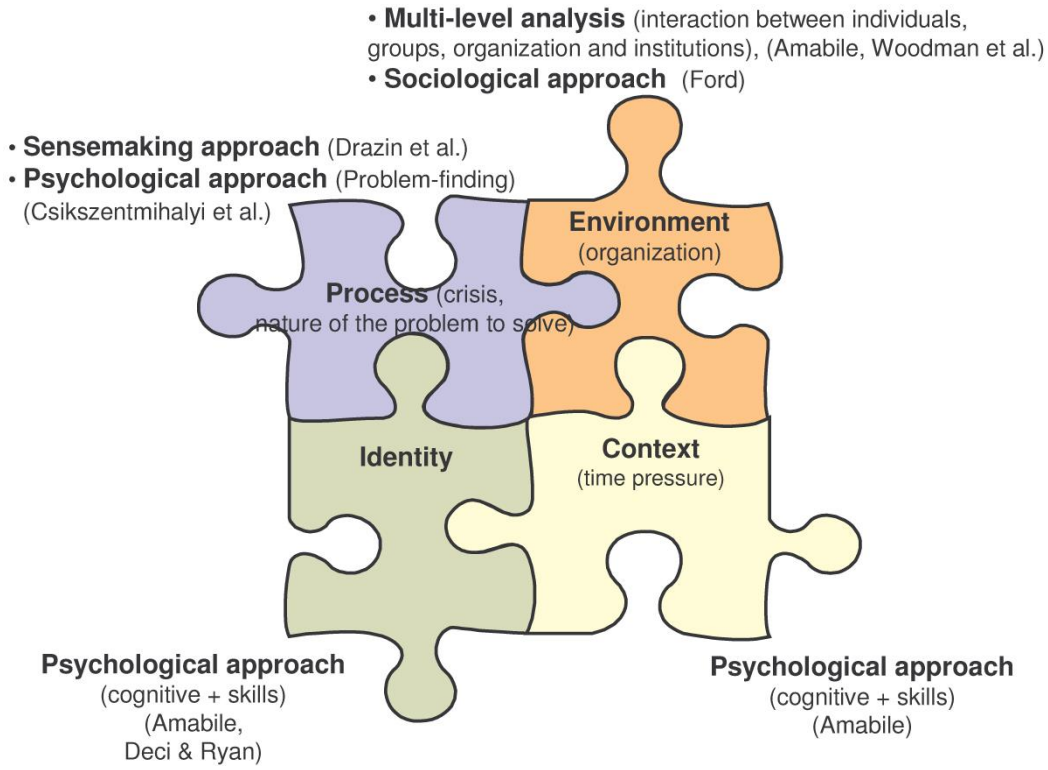


Figure 3.13: Explored aspects of creativity and frameworks used for analysis

Although home improvement frequently incorporates the work of designers either *directly* through commissions, or *indirectly* such as through projects conveyed in media, together with the remit to produce novel ideas, this study differentiates between disciplinary input and non-disciplinary input with regard to creativity. Where design is generally associated with the work of professionals, DIY generally reflects "a more democratic design process of self-driven, self directed amateur design and production activity" (Atkinson, 2006, p. 1). It is this sense of empowerment and productivity takes DIY into the broader realm of creativity and away from more focused disciplinary design.[153]

[153] For example, with architecture the practices of *making* (building) and *using* are secondary to the process of ideation, and the creation of drawings (design process).

Creative activity

Extending beyond Mumford's determination that creativity "involves the production of novel, useful products" (2003, p. 110), the production or creation of other kinds of outcome are also relevant in DIY activity, such as forging new patterns of behaviour, expanding knowledge and skills, and experiencing self-fulfillment (Unsworth, 2001). Engaging both mind and body exploring ways to resolve three-dimensional challenges, DIY is widely acknowledged as a practice both fuelled by and supportive of creative behaviour, and "consist[s] of different levels of creative design input" (Atkinson, 2006, p. 2).

DIY as a movement embraces a broad spectrum of people who make or create things without the hired help of others, placing "themselves in an increasingly independent and self-supplying situation" (Hoftijzer, 2009b, p. 1). Even though DIY groups contribute to independence and the "maintenance of self-identity" (Atkinson, 2006, p. 7), there is pressure to reach socially acceptable levels of skill and degrees of invention:

> Creativity - the core value embodied by DIY communities, simultaneously entices and deters participation: on one hand, our respondents want to share their projects to receive feedback and inspiration from the community; at the same time however, creativity is a filter for sharing work that is self-perceived as un-creative (not novel or uninteresting, etc). (Kuznetsov & Paulos, 2010, p. 9)

According to Atkinson, DIY communities who come together to distribute ideas and share experiences, although "driven by creativity" (2006, p. 8), are thus also sometimes held back by expectations of themselves as "agents of design rather than merely a passive consumer" (2006, p. 7).[154] Although supportive of generalised creativity, peer groups in this scenario can be detrimental to individual creative performance, and may indicate why television programmes, books, magazines and Internet searches are more popular ways of gathering ideas and

[154] Thus expectations of design are linked with professional practice rather than generalised creativity, just as case study participants with design backgrounds felt pressure to meet peer expectations.

technical know-how from media *experts* than joining DIY clubs to interact with experienced DIY practitioners (Marsh, 1998).

Not only do external sources "tap into the aspiration to achieve both self and domestic improvement" (Allon, 2008, p. 57), but also allow the DIYer to try new ideas without the validation of a critical eye.[155] The work of those in creative occupations (such as architecture) is generally assessed against industry or acknowledged standards, DIY as a leisure activity provides opportunity for creativity on the practitioner's own terms (time, method, purpose, judgement) and applying their own ideas without restriction.[156]

Creativity and improvisation

Current anthropological focus, especially in relation to business and organisational management, is on creativity as "a major driver of economic prosperity and social well-being" (Ingold & Hallam, 2007, p. 1). In popular media, creativity is seen to add value to everyday life particularly in relation to home improvement, where it contributes directly to home adding economic value to property, and to social life at home adding personal, cultural and social value (McElroy, 2008; Palmer, 2008).

Tim Ingold reports on the cultural construction and commoditisation of everyday life and the dominant opinion that creativity is more closely aligned with innovation than improvisation. Rather, Ingold argues, creativity is a process by which people improvise as they experience new situations and in doing so contribute to culture and value systems. Innovation, he observes, is how we characterise the products of creative process, and to "read creativity as innovation is, if you will, to read it backwards" (2007, p. 2).

Ingold's observation informs the way the processes of creativity and design are differently framed in this study. Design process for architects typically exists within a structure of rules and regulations, standardised contractual obligations, codes of

[155] Step four in Amabile's creative process 'response validation' indicates the testing of the response to a problem against factual or domain specific knowledge (refer Figure 3.20).
[156] For example, external validation, discipline-specific or commercially-oriented moderation.

practice and disciplinary guidelines (RIBA, 2008). Although creativity contributes to the outcomes produced by a designer, the drawings that convey details of a project – two-dimensional representation of bespoke three-dimensional construction details, are largely the result of conventional design practice mixed with innovation (von Stamm, 2008).

By contrast, the environment within which DIY home improvement most often takes place is less controlled, less regulated and less routinised than a professionally organised building project. Extending Baker's observation that "improvisation occurs when the design and execution of novel activities converge" (2003, p. 255), it would appear that the more conventional the situation, the fewer opportunities for novel behaviour or activity. As such, an informal building site still functioning as a place of daily domestic activity and habitation, is more conducive to novel activity such as improvisation, responsive adaptation and creativity.

Counter to the relative certainty of the design process followed by an architect in order to deliver the outcome expected by clients and builders, the creative process of DIYers is less prescribed; the "workmanship of uncertainty involves learning as you go along" (Gunn & Donovan, 2012a, p. 6). Although DIY is a "stimulus for creativity" (Hoftijzer, 2009b, p. 5), it is also an impetus for personal growth; DIY encourages the practitioner to gather knowledge and skills as required for the task at hand, where "as a consequence of their innate need to create and have influence, people actually will increasingly do things for themselves" (2009b, pp. 1-2).

Most of the DIY practitioners in this study have little or no formal design training; few have skills to help with spatial manipulation, and few can draw to externalise their thoughts on paper (Lawson, 2004). Few non-designers in this cohort have more than a rudimentary ability to visualise or develop architectural concepts, or develop design options that overcome or embrace the constraints of the site – their home, discussed further in section 4.6. However, large numbers of DIYers in Australia as well as other countries are observed applying creative processes to

homes, becoming creators, makers and producers, improvising to move beyond the restrictive boundaries of organised work-based practices (Knobel & Lankshear, 2010).

Creativity in human activity

Although Maslow and Israel's models of need make reference to a goal-driven course of action seeking improvement, they mostly bypass the process of change and the motivation and skills required to engineer transformation (Figures 3.8, 3.9). Although these models indicate *positive* action is necessary to achieve full potential (i.e. self-actualization), such as undertaking creative pursuits and developing skills and expertise; the momentary nature of Maslow's *peak experience* appears to exclude the need for a sustained feeling of subjective well-being (Burleston, 2005; Vitters, 2004). Neither model addresses the motivation for activity itself or asks whether satisfaction arises through attaining a goal related to DIY activity or as a byproduct of doing DIY activity.[157]

Concepts more useful when considering engagement with sustained creative activity, rather than a momentary episode, include Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi's *systems model of creativity* (Figure 3.14), together with the concept of *flow*. According to Csikszentmihalyi, people find deep satisfaction being engaged in creative activity; especially doing something that is intrinsically rewarding and challenges ability and skill to the maximum (Stebbins, 2007). Csikszentmihalyi's *theory of optimal experience* expands on this peak *flow* experience, identifying eight components with clear similarities to qualities of serious leisure as defined by Stebbins (Figure 3.15[158]). Optimal experience is compromised when the task is not challenging enough, or beyond the skills of the practitioner—an issue identified by participants in relation to the portrayal of DIY tasks as easy by the media regardless of an individual's experience or skill set.[159]

[157] For example, a goal might be finishing a DIY job so the mess can be cleaned up and a space used, and a by-product might be the alternative use of time spent, an escape from other kinds of activities.
[158] Adapted from: Stebbins, 2007, pp. 14-16.
[159] For discussion on the way the media is seen to simplify DIY projects for the consuming audience, refer to section 3.5.

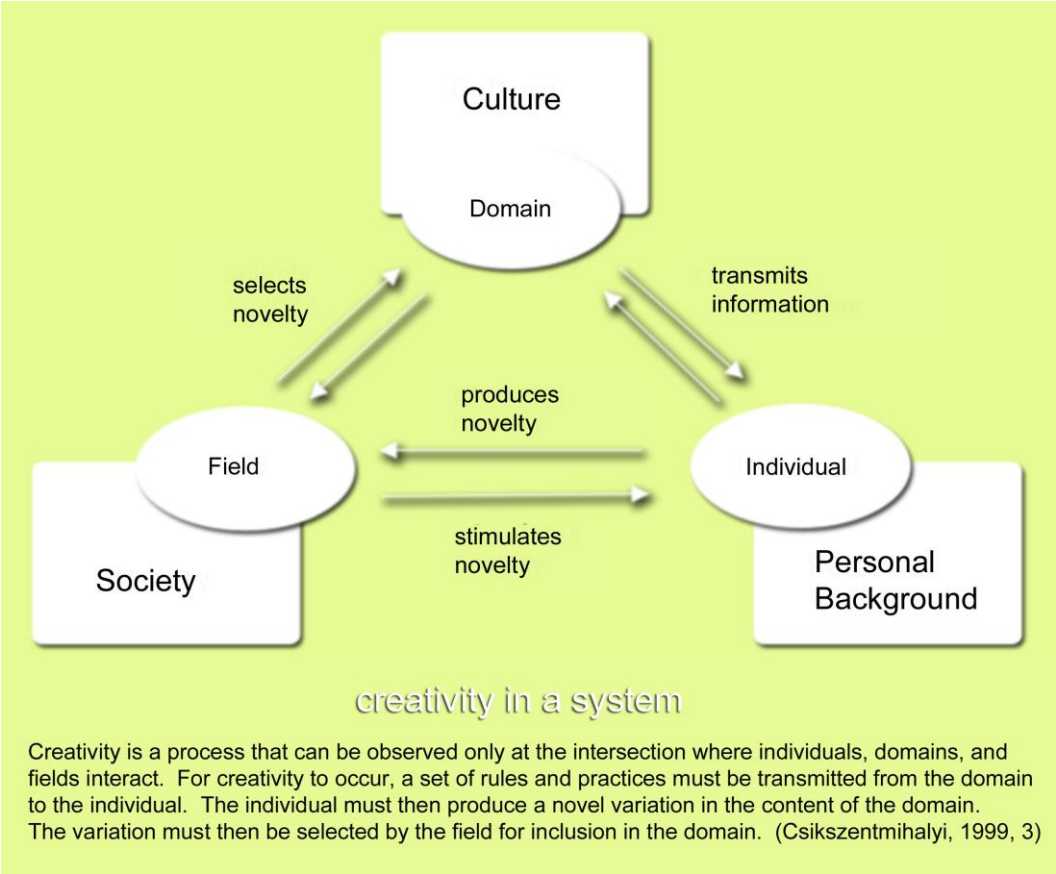


Figure 3.14: Systems model of creativity after Csikszentmihalyi

The perception that improving a home environment will lead to a better, more practical, more modern, and more efficient way of living in a particular building, also encompasses the need to keep up with social expectations even though happiness is not guaranteed. However, Shove's study and other surveys found that many people chose to undertake DIY themselves as they enjoy *doing* something useful and creative. Considered both a creative human activity (Campbell, 2005) and a leisure pursuit (Stebbins, 2001), DIY appears to offer sensory stimulation, relaxation and sufficient balance between challenge and reward to make it both enjoyable and interesting (Scitovsky, 1981).

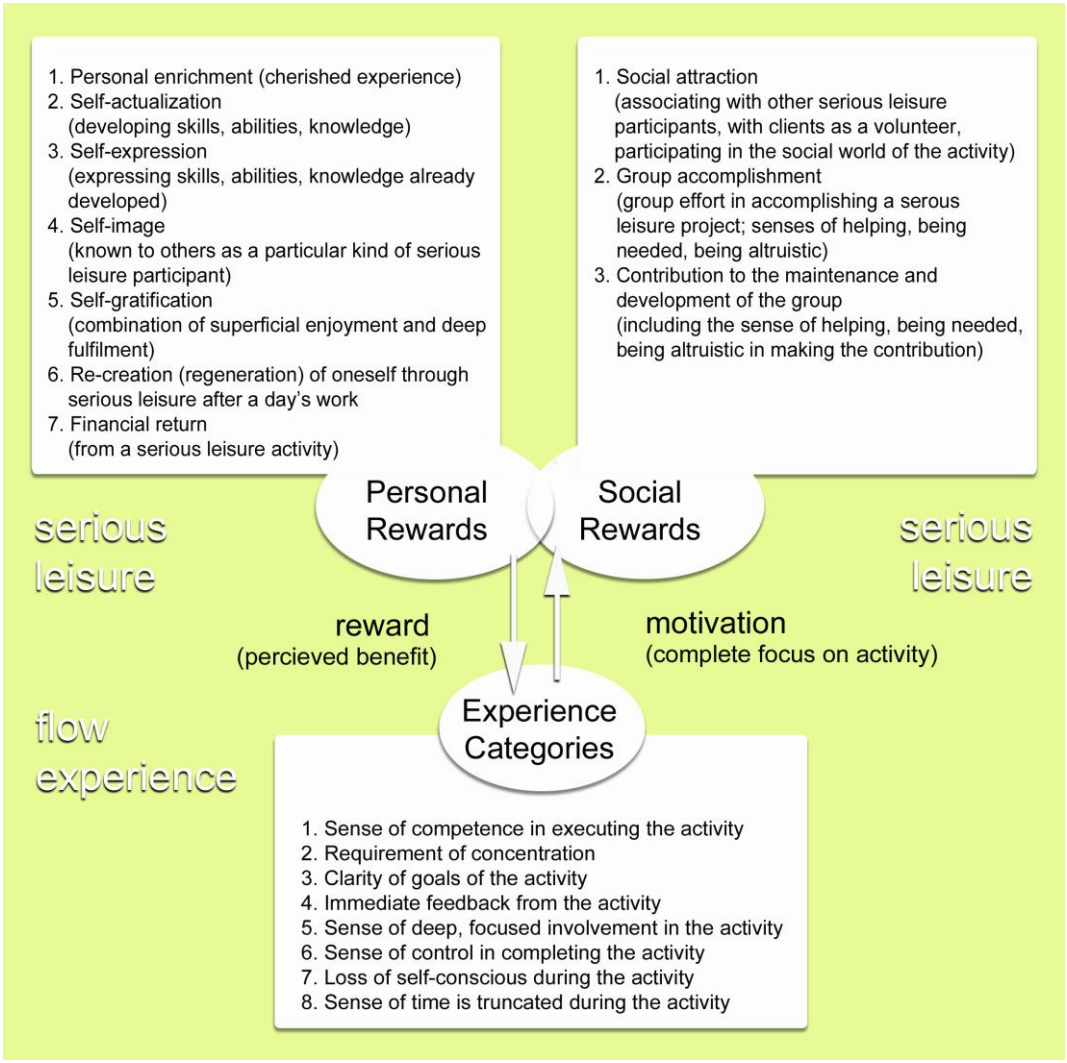


Figure 3.15: Rewards of complete engagement with serious leisure activity

Stebbins' categorisation of leisure indicates that DIY can be either *serious leisure*, a challenging activity carried out repeatedly with ongoing investment in skills development and the acquisition of knowledge, or *project-based leisure*, where something relatively complicated and short-term is a one-off or occasional "creative undertaking (core activity)" (2007, p. 5). The rewards of both, especially serious leisure, are strongly personal and social, with an intensity of enjoyment linked to the *flow* experience while also appearing to satisfy Maslow's higher needs (Figure 3.7).

Although the concepts of *flow* and *serious leisure* highlight the pre-occupation of the individual on a task, neither supports the assumption that "creativity is an individual trait" (1999, p. 11). Rather, both emphasise that creative activity emerges and is supported by a complex network of rules and regulations that exist in community, society and culture. According to Csikszentmihalyi, for example, the interrelation of various domains[160] makes up the cultural context supporting creativity and facilitates individual action,[161] leading to transformation:

> Creativity occurs when a person makes a change in a domain, a change that will be transmitted through time. Some individuals … make such changes, either because of personal qualities or because they have the good fortune to be well positioned with respect to the domain – they have better access to it, or their social circumstances allow them free time to experiment. (1999, p. 3)

The systems model locates activity in relation to fields of knowledge and practice through culture and domains, social norms and expectations through field and social systems, and the experience and capabilities of the person as the individual engaged in activity. Additionally, the model acknowledges the role of internal and external factors motivating and influencing an individual, and emphasises the complexity of the cultural and social framework within which activity, specifically creative activity, takes place:

> The need to orchestrate multiple cognitive systems while executing a number of complex, parallel processing operations indicates that creative thought is inherently a demanding, resource-intensive undertaking. (Mumford, 2003, p. 112)

The systems model further identifies parallel connections between the individual, field—aspects of society including communities of practice, and domain—identified by knowledge, tools, values and practices, indicating a two-way transmission of influence. The connectivity between all three aspects of the system relies partly on the production and transmission of knowledge through communities and

[160] For example, the domains of architecture and construction, refer Amabile's model, Figure 3.18.
[161] Creativity thus located within the realm of both life chance (rules and regulations) and life choice (individual action/inaction).

technologically supported systems such as the media – reinforcing the link between DIY as a creative practice and the *context* thread in this study.

Types of creativity

Although the above models situate creativity within a complex framework, creativity has also been explored in relation to the individual's response to more immediate factors impacting their behaviour. One line of discussion tracing *types* of creativity, highlights key issues that impact creative practices such as DIY, to include problem finding and solving, motivation and utilisation of resources, the latter used to demonstrate a connection between creativity and bricolage (Le Loarne, 2005; Unsworth, 2001).

Choosing the DIY approach to home renovation, a practitioner takes a relatively unplanned course of action utilising meanings, values, skills and experiences, as well as artefacts, materials and tools. The link between creativity, improvisation, uncertainty and the use of "tools … strategies, methods or … materials as are at hand" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008, p. 3), thus lends itself to the proposition that creativity and bricolage share similar definitional characteristics (Payne, 1998). According to Le Loarne, creativity and bricolage are seen to "converge toward the same idea of resource gathering, assimilation and re-combination to produce something new and useful" (2005, p. 2). Although Le Loarne identifies differences in the disciplinary focus on approaches—creativity with psychology, and bricolage with anthropology—she considers bricolage "a means to explore creativity within a time and a crisis context" (2005, p. 14), and locates it *within* Unsworth's matrix of four types of creativity (Figure 3.16).[162]

Unsworth's matrix identifies two 'drivers' behind creativity – internal and external motivation, and two problem types – open and closed. Where people are "initiators of their own behaviour" (Deci & Ryan, 1987, p. 1025) and either feel the need to be creative or want to achieve a goal, these are *internal* drivers. Where

[162] A similar four way typology has been applied to DIY activity by Atkinson who defines four 'distinct areas' of DIY practices; pro-active DIY, reactive DIY, essential DIY and lifestyle DIY (2006, p. 3), refer section 2.4.

people are required to be creative in response to other people's wants or needs, or as required in their work, these are *external* drivers.

Thus as a creative activity, DIY may be both internally and externally driven; design practice by contrast is mostly driven by external demands for creativity. Likewise, DIY can present both problem types identified on the matrix: *open*, where the practitioner "is required to find, invent or discover the problem", and *closed* where "the method for solving the problem is known" (Unsworth, 2001, p. 290). Professional designers such as architects, however, have the skills and tools to approach projects as closed problems, even where less common aspects of a project require the exploration of unfamiliar issues.

Although Unsworth identifies types of creativity according to the nature of problems and drivers—motivations and influences—behind engagement, Le Loarne suggests that context is also important to creativity, including timescales for solving problems and resources available. The matrix presents several permutations of creative types, however, bricolage appears more likely when the problem can be identified and constraints prevent open-ended exploration. In other words, the bricoleur has a limited timescale (and funds) to seek more suitable resources, making do with what is to hand at the time. Bricolage is subsequently located as a *type of* creative behaviour or *novel activity* that deviates from usual practice, and occurs "when it is time to improvise" (Le Loarne, 2005, p. 9).[163] Baker counters this with a more selective interpretation on the occurrence of novel activity, indicating that "bricolage, while playing a key role in improvisation, also occurs outside of improvisational episodes" (2003, p. 255), such as when *familiar* substitutes for resources normally available are used.

Le Loarne proposes a third axis for the matrix to show availability of resources, as either *on stock* thus to hand and available, or *extra stocked* to be gathered once the problem is identified, thus leading to consumption activity (Figure 3.17).

[163] Emphasising the link between creativity and improvisation, as previously indicated.

TYPES OF CREATIVITY AS IDENTIFIED BY UNSWORTH (2001) AND ADAPTED BY LE LOARNE (2005)

On the vertical axis, problem type ranges from closed (presented to the individual) to open (discovered by the individual). The horizontal axis represents the drivers behind engagement in the creative process and ranges from externally to internally driven. These dimensions represent continua, and different contexts can be located anywhere within the bounded space. (Unsworth, 2001, 290)

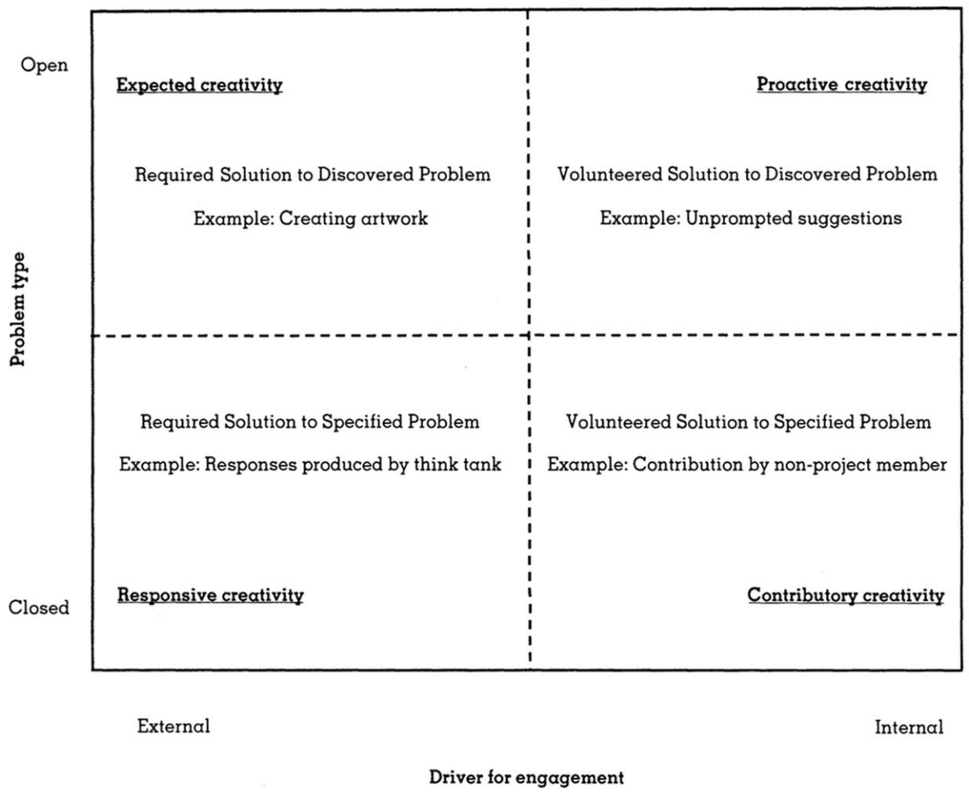


Figure 3.20a: Matrix of creativity types (source: Unsworth, 2001, 291)

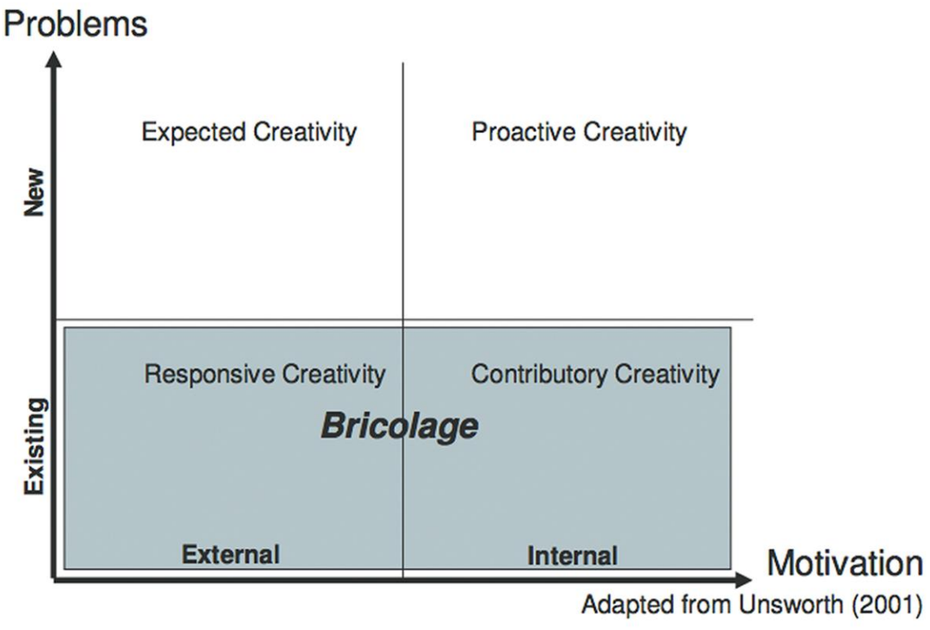


Figure 3.20b: Bricolage in Unsworth's typology of creativity (source: Le Loarne, 2005, 14)

Figure 3.16:
Types of creativity - two related matrices

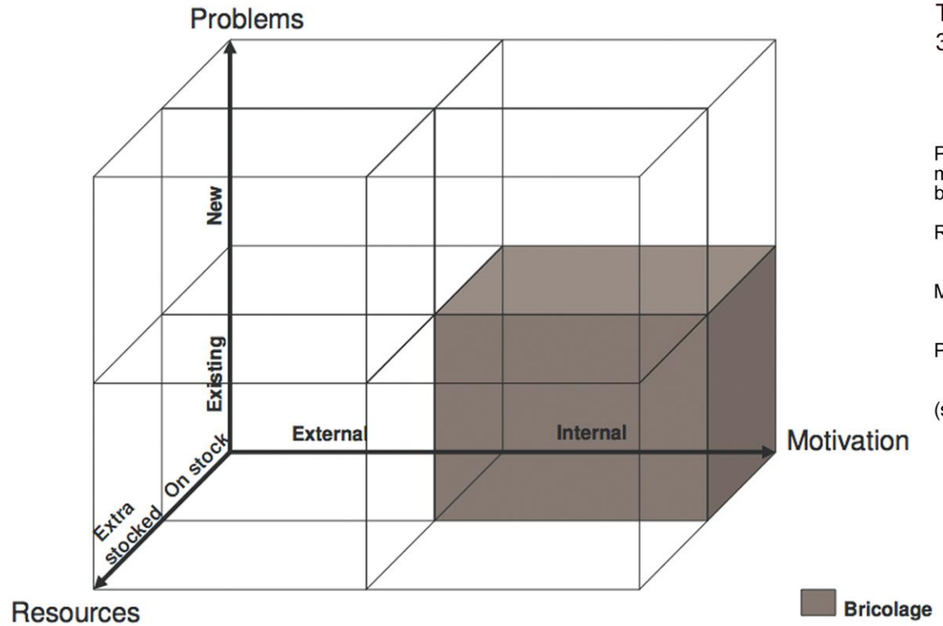
BRICOLAGE AS A TYPE OF CREATIVITY

Comparison between bricolage and creativity (source: Le Loarne, 2005, 12-13)

Le Loarne presents contradictions in his analysis of creativity and bricolage, indicating differences between the model of creativity with bricolage (right), and the comparison table (below) in terms of context (problems), resources and actors.

For comparison of process and output refer Figures 3.19 and 3.20.

	Bricolage	Creativity
Designation	• Process and product (output)	• Process or product (ouput)
Context	• Identified problem (by individual or by the group) • Problem solving situation • More or less expected	• More or less "closed" or "opened" problem • Expected or not
Process	• Not well modelized • Resources gathering, task identification, development of the solution (development of a new framework), outcome assessment	• Five main stages: task identification, resources gathering, idea development, idea selection and outcome assessment
Resources	• Material resources • Collected without any explicit and ex-ante purpose	• Any kind of resources • To be collected when needed but the creative man knows where they are if needed
Actors	• Individuals • Curious and interconnection with several networks, worlds, cultures	• Individuals and small groups • Three main characteristics: intrinsic motivation, skills in the domain and creative skills
Relation with the environment	• Material • Cultural	• "Human"
Final output	• More or less expected • Temporal finality	• New and useful



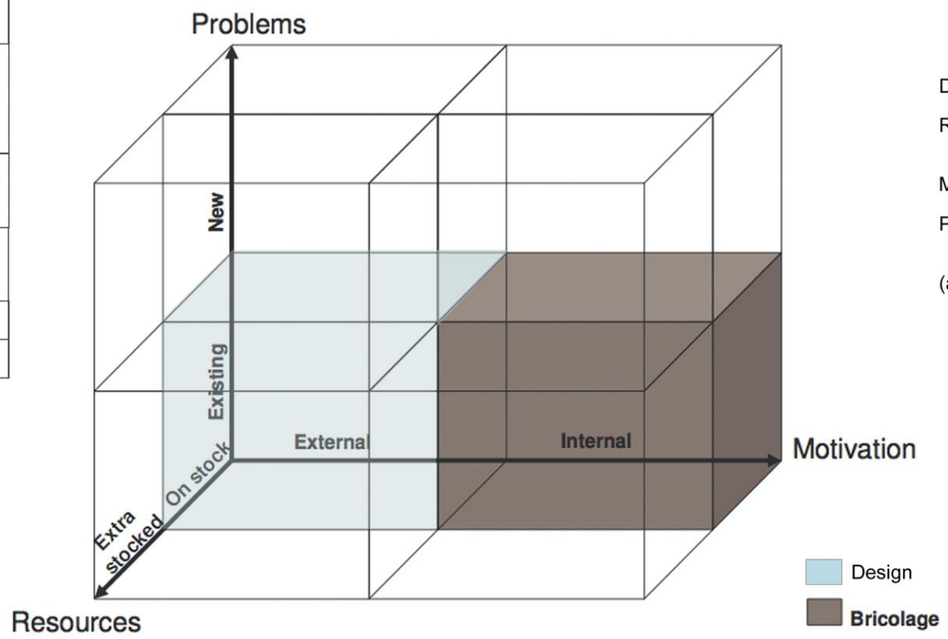
TYPES OF CREATIVITY IDENTIFIED IN 3 DIMENSIONAL MATRIX FORMAT

Propositions for extending Unsworth's model - axis 'resources' added and bricolage:

Resources - on stock; using things to hand rather than acquiring new items for the task
Motivation - internal; especially with DIY where projects are determined by the individual and self-navigated.
Problem - existing; working on issues that are largely known or familiar

(source: Le Loarne, 2005, 15)

Figure 3.17:
Types of creativity – bricolage located



Design added to Le Loarne's model:

Resources - on stock; readily available, tools, skills and materials already available in a design office situation
Motivation - external; designer engaged by clients and working to deadlines
Problems - existing; largely working with familiar design issuesor challenges

(adapted from: Le Loarne, 2005, 15)

Figure 3.18:
Types of creativity – design location proposed

The additional axis repositions bricolage in the matrix as a type of creativity practiced when resources are already in possession; materials, information and/or skills previously collected without any preconceived idea of what they might be used for, or how they might be used. The bricoleur in this scenario relies instead (internally) motivated to collect resources without having identified a problem first. In developing a matrix around three aspects of creativity—problem, motivation and resources, Le Loarne concludes that:

> Bricolage seems more precise than creativity and can be regarded as one type of creativity.... Bricolage sheds light on [currently unexplored] aspects of creativity … the link between the performance of creative individuals and the mode of resource gathering (when, what and how). (2005, p. 16)

The availability of resources such as time, materials and knowledge, and method of use, whether participants approach their home improvement as a *createur* (creative/artist) or a *bricoleur,* usefully extends analysis of DIY behaviour in this study (Atkins, 1987). The matrix aids in further establishing the context within which people undertake DIY; the knowledge, skills, information and materials they have to hand or require, the way they engage with their leisure time, and what motivates or influences them.

Furthermore, locating bricolage and creativity using Le Loarne's model assists in differentiating informal everyday self-navigated creativity from more structured design, often guided by professional conventions or utilising specific tools to aid creative production (Figure 3.18). A design professional will often address familiar issues[164] using processes already known to them[165] and will generally respond to externally controlled deadlines. An architect might incorporate elements of creativity and bricolage during the course of a design process, however the design project is distinguished by the *relative* predictability of the outcome. The sequential steps taken by a design professional to realise an output anticipated by others, such as a plan/drawing, thus externally motivated, and contrasts with a less structured process dominated by everyday creativity and improvisation that does is not

[164] For example, building a new house on a suburban block—existing problem.
[165] For example, liaison with a client, negotiations with planning authorities, requirements of consultants—knowledge, tools and skills on stock.

formally communicated to others. In this case, the creator is the maker and producer—the practices of design and use come together in DIY.

Creative processes

As will be discussed in chapter 4, the case study investigates whether the creative process taken by a designer, in comparison to that by a non-designer engaged in DIY home improvement, is enhanced or limited by the rigidity of the process normally followed by the designer at work. Taking Amabile's interpretation of the creative process and subsequent adaptation of the same model by Le Loarne, a strong link is made between motivation and creative behaviour. Amabile proposes that "intrinsic motivation is conducive to creativity and extrinsic motivation is detrimental" (1985, p. 393).

To Amabile, even people motivated by their "own interest and involvement in a task" (1985, p. 393), rather than the expectations of others or external goals, may be influenced by the judgement of others on their performance. Thus an architect might be under pressure to deliver a higher standard of design based on their professional background than would a non-designer. External expectation changing self-perception and potentially impacting motivation had implications for the case study.[166] Professional work experience and training contribute strongly to creative performance according to the key components or *factors*[167] identified by Amabile as necessary for creativity (Figure 3.19[168]).

Of Amabile's three components, domain-relevant skills, "the basis from which any performance must proceed … [including] factual knowledge, technical skills, and special talents in the domain in question" (1983, p. 362), may be skills an architect brings to a client's project, or a builder brings to a construction site. Although domain-relevant skills are acquired and situation-specific, creativity-relevant skills

[166] Discussed earlier in the context of peer group pressure within DIY enthusiast clubs and the risk of exposing ones self to critical review.
[167] Amabile uses the word *factors* to represent "elements, circumstances, or conditions contributing to a process or outcome" (1983, p. 362).
[168] Source: Amabile (1983, p. 362), figure redrawn for legibility.

appear to be more intuitive or personality-based, and "include cognitive style, application of heuristics for the exploration of new cognitive pathways and working style" (1983, p. 363).[169]

Figure 3.19: Components of creative performance

Amabile incorporates these three components in her *framework* of creativity, linked with five consecutive stages of her creativity process (Figure 3.20). As a group, the inter-related factors and steps in the process depend on "innate cognitive, perceptual, and motor abilities as well as formal and informal education in the domain of Endeavor" (ibid.). Le Loarne interprets the same creative process using different terminology, pointing out that while stage two *resource gathering* is the stage most clearly identifying the work of the bricoleur, it does not explain *how* resources are accumulated (2005). The bricoleur, according to Innes & Booher, uses "a heterogeneous but finite store of materials and tools" (1999, p. 9), rather than *gathering* materials, tools and knowledge once the task has been identified, as indicated with stage two of Amabile's framework.

Skills relevant in a domain such as architecture contribute to general levels of creativity such as three-dimensional imagination and aesthetic appreciation, and to motivation, assuming an architect might be more confident about his/her ability to solve spatial problems than someone who does not work in the same field. However, this is not to say a non-designer would be lacking in creativity according to these components, but possibly lacking the experience in building design that an

[169] The case study included DIYers with both skill types, and a range of task motivations, to facilitate further investigation of these issues.

A FRAMEWORK OF CREATIVITY

Original figure notes
(source Amabile, 1983, 367):

Componential framework of creativity. (Broken lines indicate the influence of particular factors on others, Solid lines indicate the sequence of steps in the process. Only direct and primary influences are depicted here.)

"The framework describes the way in which an individual might assemble and use information in attempting to arrive at a solution, response, or product...the process outlined... is proposed to be the same for both high and low levels of creativity."

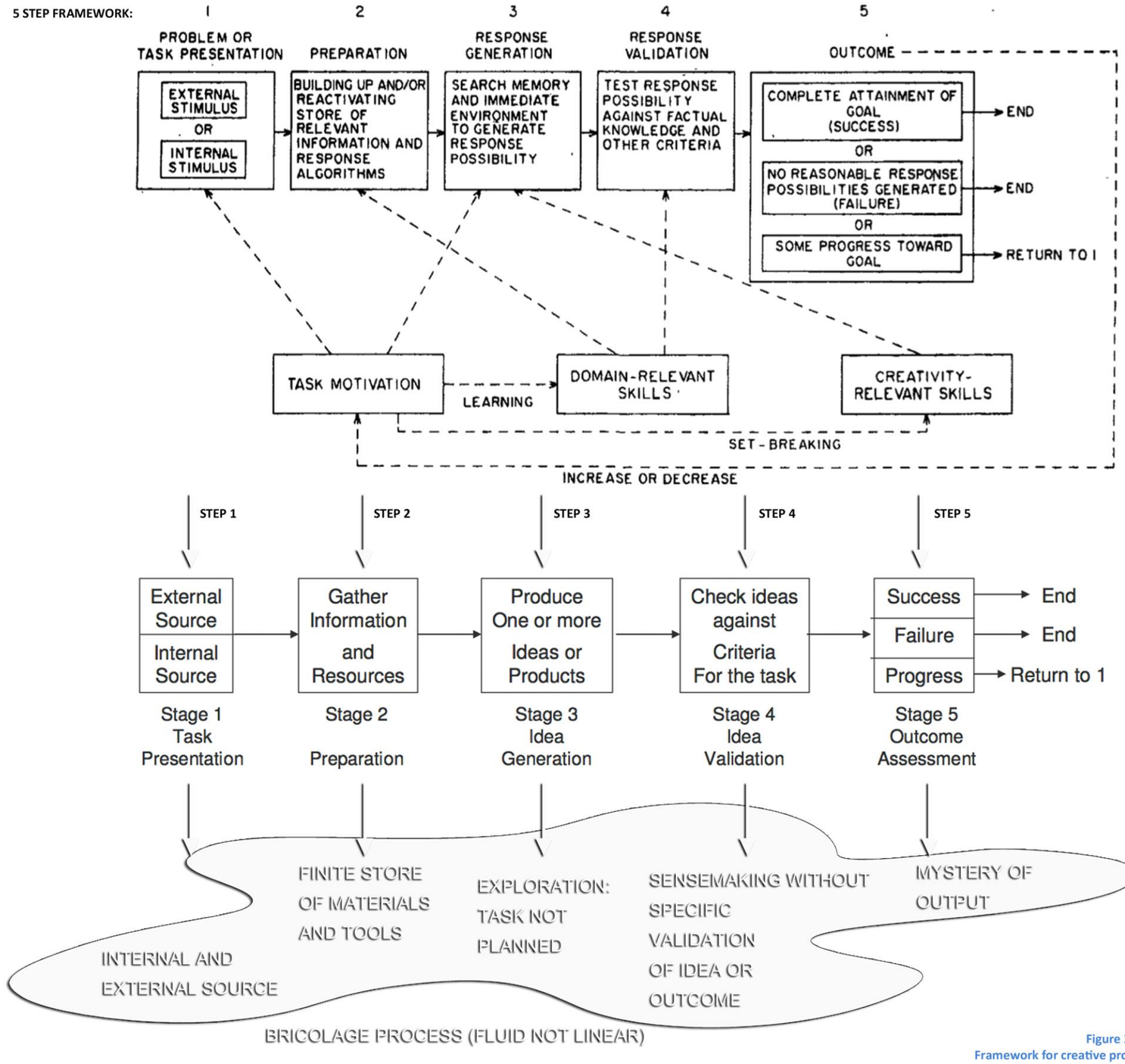


Figure 3.20:
Framework for creative process

A MODEL OF CREATIVE PROCESS

Original figure:
(source Amabile, 1988, 138):

Individual or small group creativity
(a revision of her 1983 model).

Notes on Amabile's figure
(source Le Loarne, 2005, 9):

"Contrary to the process of bricolage, the process of individual creativity has already been modelized... Amabile's one... cuts the creative process into five successive tasks... The way resources are gathered is not explained... Stages 4 and 5 imply that the idea or output is creative only if it is considered as useful by the organization or the community that ought to accept or reject it... These two stages ... [are] rejected by other researchers who consider a creative output regardless [of] its useful or un-useful aspect."

Notes on bricolage (as applied in this study) by comparison (source Le Loarne, 2005, 10):

"The process of bricolage follows almost the same general phases... [but] resources are finite... [but] capable of changing its 'cognitive map'."

architect gains through working on different project and with peers. Given the proliferation of *how to* design and build information available via popular media sources, a DIY practitioner would, in theory, be able to gather sufficient information to produce what might be perceived as an imaginative and workable project, and furthermore may be under less pressure to achieve a *professional* quality of design or build finish.

Although extrinsic pressures on motivation such as the work deadlines in an architectural office, and negative perceptions such as those brought about by comparisons between professional and non-professional or *amateur* workmanship, Amabile points out that extensive domain-skills may also inhibit creativity (1983). To counter issues potentially inhibiting creativity, such as domain specificity, the creativity framework includes provision for *set-breaking* influences (Figure 3.20). People with creativity-relevant skills theoretically have the ability to help them escape *functional fixedness* and break out of *performance scripts*, and tend towards problem finding rather than problem solving behaviour. The case study essentially facilitates the exploration of *set breaking* through comparing the DIY process of three participants in occupations requiring the ability to think creatively, two designers with different domain-specific skills and a creative writer.[170]

Returning briefly to a mode of creative behaviour highlighted in the previous section and relevant to discussion on breaking with set patterns, yet not addressed by the above authors, improvisation. Making a connection between motivation, creativity and improvisation, Maslow essentially divides creativity into primary, secondary and integrated[171] thought processes. Although dealing mostly with cognitive processes rather than activity, Maslow links creativity closely with psychological health, personality and an individual's sense of wellbeing. Where primary thought is "best exemplified by the improvisation … rather than … the work of art designated as 'great'" (Maslow, 1999, p. 159), secondary thought, "the kind

[170] The case study, in responding to the second key research question (RQ2), explores the possibility that an architect may be constrained by their domain-specific training and experience.
[171] Primary and secondary combined.

that leads to creative achievements … [is] typically recognised by a field" (Sternberg, 1999a, p. 85), such as architecture. Secondary thought process as defined here further suggests formal design process is subject to domain-specificity, external motivation and issues of resource acquisition identified before.

The motive-problem oriented matrix developed by Unsworth and adapted by Le Loarne to include the influence of resources and timescale, and the motive-skill framework of performance developed by Amabile, essentially reflect "the modern conception of creativity … [as] a human faculty that exceeds the everyday and routine processes of thinking and doing" (Coyne, 1997, p. 135). In contrast, although Maslow emphasises the critical role of motivation in behaviour, he also views creativity as essential to "the 'Being' of the person" (1999, p. 161), and further that "the creative impulse is 'self-actualizing' and arises out of personal need" (Rogers, 1954, p. 249). Creativity then, whether identified by types, processes or practices is considered integral to every human activity, and accessible to professional or amateur alike: "Human life finds its essential meaning in a creation that can … be pursued at every moment in every man" (Bergson 1919, p. 24, cited in Kaufman & Sternberg, 2005, p. 104).

DIY as a practice of bricolage

Bricolage emerged as an important theme running through this thesis, although importantly, its contribution has been made under several guises (Appendix 4). Bricolage has previously been introduced as the research methodology, as the format for the thesis document, and identified as a particular type of problem-solving process within the theme of creativity. In this section, bricolage is discussed in relation to the research questions, highlighting issues that connect directly with threads (Figure 3.21).

Bricolor

The term *bricolage*, originating from the French verb *bricolor* – to fiddle or tinker or putter about, has been translated and variously applied across a wide range of disciplines and fields. The definition has been extended to mean, "to make creative

and resourceful use of whatever materials are at hand (regardless of their original purpose)" (Wilde, 2008). Bricolage has been identified as a method of exploration that utilises available resources:

> No one source of data is necessary or sufficient, because ethnography is a *bricolage*. As Denzin and Lincoln (1994, p2) note … bricolage is "a pieced-together, close knit set of practices that provide solutions to a problem in a concrete situation"; it is an emergent construction "that changes and takes on new forms as different tools, methods, and techniques are added to the puzzle". It is "pragmatic, strategic, and self-reflective" (Higgs, 1997, p. 53).

The Denzin and Lincoln definition within the above captures qualities of practice that can be applied to a broad range of issues emerging throughout this study, not least including; construction, creativity, resourcefulness, experimentation, improvisation, assemblage, collage, blended styles, diversity of materials and makeshift handiwork.

Bricolage as doing

Bricolage is interpreted within *doing* as the practice of tinkering around/doing odd jobs and the retail trade surrounding DIY. Indeed both French (*bricolage*) and Spanish (*bricolaje or bricolage*) dictionaries translate the noun directly as 'do-it-yourself' (*bricolage*, 2013a; *bricolage*, 2013b).

Historically, DIY culture encouraged people to be resourceful and creative, to make or create something they want but not necessarily need, or could afford. This was particularly relevant in the first half of the twentieth century in response to post-war shortages of labour and/or materials. Through salvaging and recycling discarded items rather than purchasing new items, and by remodelling and improving something rather than replacing it, DIY provides the opportunity to consume more selectively, acquiring bits and pieces *as required* not whole items/products or services.

LOCATING ‘BRICOLAGE’ WITHIN DATA:

Gender: Female
Age: 40-49yrs
Born: Germany
Childhood: Germany
Current: Suburb of Perth (rent)
Status: Married, 2 young children, 2 older children
Relation: Fellow p/g student

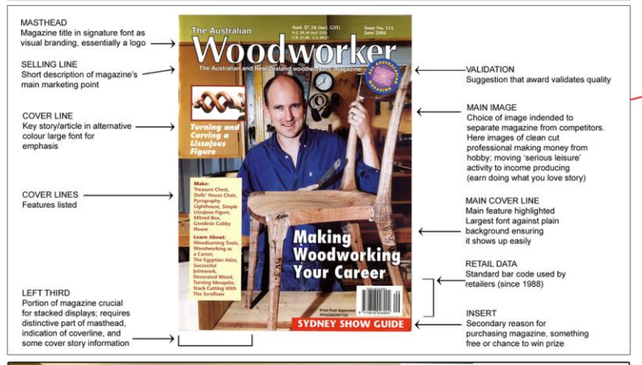
Delmar’s childhood was spent mostly in high profile rental homes tied to her father’s work. She became self-sufficient when ‘forced’ to buy her own home and renovate it - as a single mother with only occasional help.

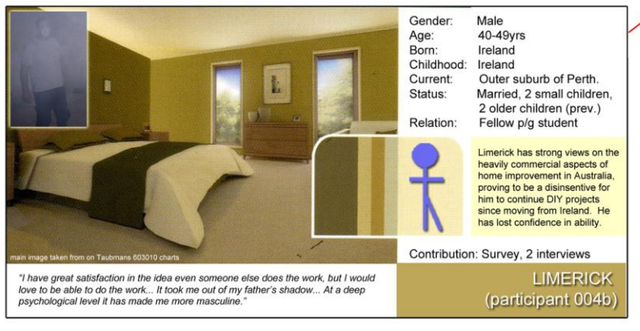
main image taken from on Taubmans 603010 charts

Contribution: Survey, 2 interviews

“I had difficulties accepting the way they [tradesmen or friends or kids] did it [renovation], and the longer I did it the more difficult for me to accept how other people do it... older people in the village told me they never had thought a woman can do that.”

DELMAR
(participant 009a)





Gender: Male
Age: 40-49yrs
Born: Ireland
Childhood: Ireland
Current: Outer suburb of Perth.
Status: Married, 2 small children, 2 older children (prev.)
Relation: Fellow p/g student

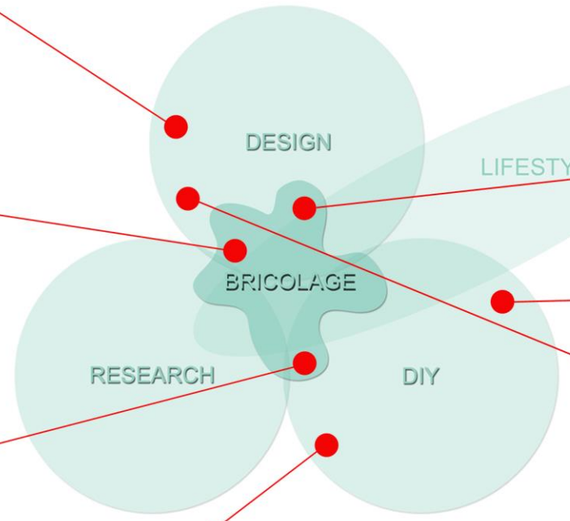
Limerick has strong views on the heavily commercial aspects of home improvement in Australia, proving to be a disinsentive for him to continue DIY projects since moving from Ireland. He has lost confidence in ability.

main image taken from on Taubmans 603010 charts

Contribution: Survey, 2 interviews

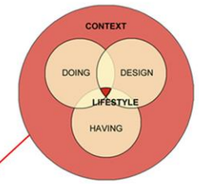
“I have great satisfaction in the idea even someone else does the work, but I would love to be able to do the work... It took me out of my father’s shadow... At a deep psychological level it has made me more masculine.”

LIMERICK
(participant 004b)

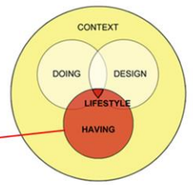


RESEARCH ‘WITH’ BRICOLAGE - BREADTH OF FIELD:
Fields of knowledge with ‘bricolage’ applications;
1. Research with bricolage methodology
2. Designer with bricolage practice
3. DIYer with bricolage activity
4. Lifestyle with bricolage context

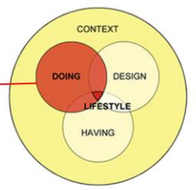
LOCATING ‘BRICOLAGE’ WITHIN STUDY (BY THREADS):



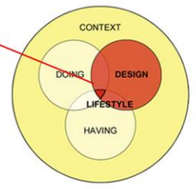
BRICOLAGE + CONTEXT:
HOME AS COLLAGE OF PLACE, PEOPLE AND OBJECTS UNDER FLUX



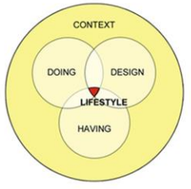
BRICOLAGE + HAVING:
EXPERIMENTAL ACQUISITION OF RESOURCES, VALUES AND IDENTITIES



BRICOLAGE + DOING:
DOING ODD JOBS/ TINKERING WITH HARDWARE AND TOOLS, MAKING/PRACTICAL TASKS



BRICOLAGE + DESIGN:
TRIAL AND ERROR DEVELOPMENT OF IDEAS, RE-ARRANGING KNOWN FACTORS IN NEWS WAYS



BRICOLAGE + LIFESTYLE:
EMERGENT CONSTRUCTION, NATURE OF RELATIONSHIP UNDER INVESTIGATION

THREADS

Figure 3.21:
Bricolage applied to threads

Figure 3.22: Road signage for DIY stores in France

In France, there are a number of hardware retail chains with names clearly derivative of the verb *bricolor*: Mr Bricolage, Bricomarche, Briconautes and Brico depot (Figure 3.22). The stores are generally laid out and stocked with a similar range of materials, tools and information as can be found in any DIY chain in the UK, Ireland or Australia. Most hardware stores, essentially single storey industrial sheds located on the outskirts of a town or city surrounded by car park, are places "where do-it-yourself enthusiasts can find everything they need to fix up their homes, from nails to corks to pigeon spikes" (Delon, 2010).

The popularity of the hardware stores in French cities appears at odds with the high proportion of rental apartments, given that in the UK and Australia tenants are actively discouraged from making any alterations to a rental property. However, according to two of the participants who grew up in Europe, rent leases are established for much longer terms than in Australia,[172] and agreements are strongly *pro-tenant*, encouraging tenants to personalise a property and even undertake minor improvement works (Montagu-Pollock, 2006). This implies that in countries such as the UK, USA and Australia, the freedom to modify home to suit individual needs or wants and ability cultivate a deeper sense of *self-place*, is a privilege of homeownership.

Although traditional hardware stores supplied DIY tools and materials to *support* the work of the *bricoleur*, a person who "recuperates materials, devices, structures

[172] In France, unfurnished tenancy contracts are for a minimum of three years where the landlord is an individual, six years for a company or society (Montagu-Pollock, 2006).

and methods and adjusts them to the current needs when nothing more suitable is available" (Longo, 2009, p. 5), the retail model has changed over the last few decades. Where the handyman or bricoleur once relied on individual local owner-operated hardware stores catering to tradesmen for essential components to help complete a job, today's store model is oriented towards volume non-trade sales. Contemporary DIY retail has been criticised for contributing to the *de-skilling* of consumers, catering to the weekend leisure crowd who browse for ideas, entertainment and already complete, standardised solutions (Hackney, 2006).

Many of the large hardware chains as exemplified by Bricomarche and the Australian equivalents,[173] now provide a *softer* shopping experience with cafes and video displays, and offer home improvement ideas as well as *complete solutions* for kitchens and bathrooms (Cheshire, Degelcke, & Osta, 2013).[174] According to the Business Review Weekly, homemaker centres and home base expos are a growing trend (Ruehl, 2013), mostly in the form of enclosed precincts "focused on lifestyle pursuit, and on the home. It's all about what you do when you drive out of the office on a Friday afternoon" (Harley, 2009, p. 51).

Bricolage and design

Bricolage, identified as one type of creativity, according to Le Loarne is defined by the performance of creative individuals and method of resource gathering (2005). Design[175], also located within Le Loarne's creativity matrix for the purpose of this study, is constrained in three ways:

(i) by externally motivated by deadlines,
(ii) by problems that are existing or familiar, and
(iii) by the utilisation of resources and knowledge already to hand.

[173] Such as Bunnings, Mitre 10 and Home Hardware.
[174] An example of the contemporary pre-packaging of experiences as discussed by Sherry, refer section 3.5.
[175] Here characterized by a profession—architecture.

Where research questions focus on the relationship between design process and DIY practice,[176] and participant engagement with both in order to engineer transformation[177], the relationship between bricolage and design is of key relevance to the inquiry. In discussions on human-centred design (HCD), Norman and Verganti apply the term bricolage interchangeably with *tinkering*, conceptually linking bricolage with the DIY ethic and with the potential for innovation:

> When someone plays around with a product or a technology with no goal, neither for enhancement of meaning nor for practicality, we call it tinkering. Tinkering can lead to brilliant insights and new products, but when this happens it is completely accidental…. Of course, innovation often results from unpredictable events. So … watching the results of the Do-it-Yourself (DIY) or hacking community can be used as an insightful research tool to lead the designer to radical innovation. (2011, p. 15)

The inference being that a *bricoleur* interrogates a situation using a different process than a designer who is more focused on an outcome, in effect applying a procedure that is *unrehearsed*, improvised and unrepeatable. This implies that the activity is embraced for its own appeal rather then to meet a specific goal, and that a designer can only gain new insights through *observing the results* of tinkering, rather than engaging with the process itself. Here, innovation is seen as the *result* of a creative process or as the outcome of design activity, rather than the ongoing engagement *with* creativity, *with* process, and *with* transformational experiences.

The quadrant model used to illustrate Norman and Verganti's application of bricolage in a broader field of design (Figure 3.23[178]) clearly identifies tinkering as the *least* likely process to produce radical innovation. In the opposing quadrant *radical innovation* is seen to occur where the design, here product design and design research, is "directed towards new interpretations of what could be meaningful to people" (Norman & Verganti, 2011, p. 17). There is a strong correlation here with the matrix developed by Le Loarne, identifying bricolage as a

[176] RQ1: What is the relationship between design process, DIY and the construction or transformation of lifestyle?
[177] RQ1c: How do people engage with design process and/or DIY practice in order to influence their day-to-day experience of lifestyle?
[178] Adapted from: Norman & Verganti, 2011, p. 14.

type of creativity that is restricted to manipulating the resources *to hand* and less likely to develop entirely novel outcomes, or *novel interpretations of meaning*.

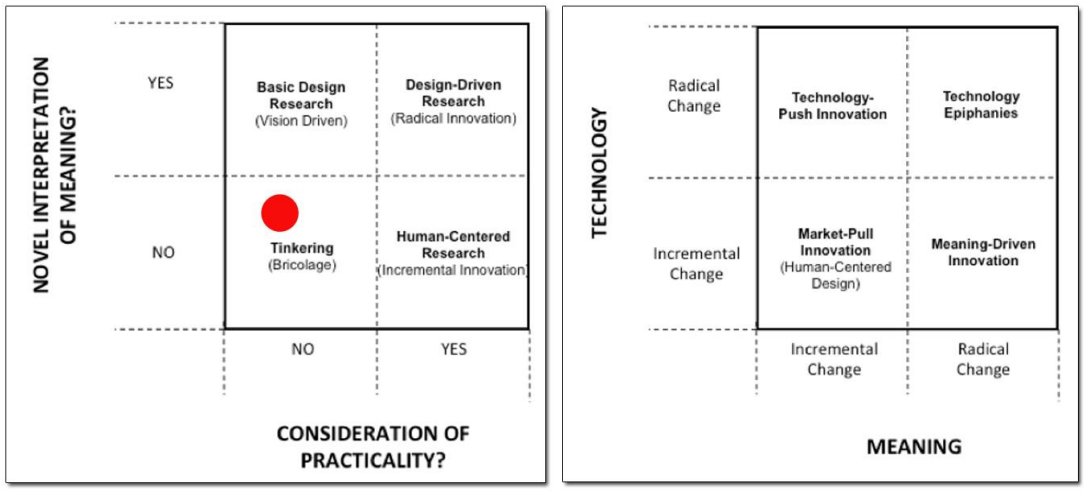


Figure 3.23: Bricolage as a type of design 'tinkering'

The quadrant model suggests that tinkering, manifest through creative practices such as DIY, mostly contributes incremental non-radical change, "improvements within a given frame of solutions" (2011, p. 5). Acknowledging this, the authors link incremental change strongly with HCD, identifying and enhancing the values and meaning things have for people. With a focus on home improvement, the quadrant has implications for the interface between design and DIY in this research, and will be discussed in chapter 5. The case study tests whether the process of tinkering or bricolage generates value or meaning for the client/homeowner/DIYer, whether designer or non-designer, and whether the concept of incremental change and improvisation is more fruitful in use-driven (DIY) rather than design-driven practices.

Bricolage aesthetic and the pro-am divide

When applied to design outcomes such as the aesthetics of building work, bricolage has both positive and negative connotations; on the one hand indicating an accidental clash of styles, and on the other a deliberate composition or mix of different styles (Nasar, 1994). Typically the architect-designed home presents a

well-articulated and consistent aesthetic, thus bricolage might describe an opposing aesthetic—an ad hoc *jumble* of built form lacking a sense of coherence. This perception is reinforced by the differing expectations of the expert and amateur, as previously indicated with Amabile's observation about the influence of domain skills on creativity, the pressure on an architect to complete a well resolved[179] home improvement project would be greater than a non-designer.

The rich and varied fabric of historic urban areas having grown organically is seen to have greater value than areas of prescribed development built all of one style or form, style variation seen as a mark of authenticity (Rowe & Koetter, 1984). Whether in relation to a single domestic building or entire town, "*bricolage* is a form of creative and contextual improvisation of paramount importance" (Longo, 2009, p. 7). According to Longo, the ad hoc behaviour of humans overwrites or modifies the artificial, over-engineered sense of uniformity with planned cities, thus by implication the greater the professional involvement the more synthetic the outcome:

> Bricolage is not only a form of design and construction alternative to the classical principles of engineering and architecture: given the unbreakable bond between knowledge and action, bricolage is also a different way to see the world…. It has a deep epistemological significance: actually, since it forces us to rethink the traditional model of rational planning and design, bricolage makes us discover cognitive (micro) processes that are typical of design but are usually hidden in the standard engineering model. (2009, p. 5)

The process of habitation and home modification might thus be considered a valuable ad hoc process by which improvised authentic adjustments are made to ways of living. Rather than impose radical design changes on an existing home and thus the inhabitants at one time, typical of a commissioned renovation, the incremental changes made by the resident as DIYer over time provides a collage of old and new, and possibly a more authentic experience of transformation. The case study presents a comparison of these *different ways of seeing* the DIY practice and home renovation.

[179] For example, in terms of form, function, capacity, layout, circulation and aesthetics.

With reference to the contrast between radical and incremental problem solving that characterises the expert/professional versus amateur positions, Turkle and Papert, present an alternative pair of contrasting approaches. People who work within a rigid frame,[180] identified as *planners*, are described alongside *painters* or bricoleurs who are free to tinker with ideas and materials. Here the term *bricolage* is applied in relation to a process of construction "by arranging and rearranging, by negotiating and renegotiating with a set of well-known materials" (1992, p. 5). This sense of the term reflects the design quadrangle (Figure 3.23), where utilising the *well-known* is less likely to lead to radical innovation, but the approach of the *painter* does have the potential to reveal insights and meaning in new ways. In contrast to Normal and Verganti's proposal, however, Turkle and Papert identify bricolage as goal-oriented rather than generalised *play*, embracing an improvisational process but clearly focused on a specific outcome.

The distinction made by the matrices in this section referencing both design and bricolage, amounts to a separation of professional and amateur practices; the domain specificity of a professional designer brings both limitations in terms of functional fixedness, and performance scripts, and opportunities to utilise well-developed skills to achieve instances of radical innovation. The case study investigated this pro-am divide to explore which approach, *painting* or *planning*, a designer would take when applying design skills in the informal environment of home, and to what extent the work is goal or play oriented. Where bricolage, as a mode of practice, has been differentiated from professional practice and design, it is relevant to consider whether and how it can inform design practice, and whether and how it can reveal more about motivations and influences on designers and non-designers as they renovate home.

[180] For example, an architect working to established deadlines, versus a DIYer who has fewer external constraints.

Bricolage and identity

The primary site of private lives, home, is a collage of history and hope, individual taste and collective style, souvenirs and gifts, appliances and furniture, plastic and fabric, colour and light, texture and form, fluid and firm. The home as a work of bricolage reveals much about the inhabitant who has purposefully collected and selectively collated objects, tools, knowledge, skills, ideas and images over time; "some tell stories coherent in every detail, some are eclectic amalgams" (Robertson, 2007, p. 63). When inhabitants' *tinker* they engage in an ongoing conversation with their environment, and as for Turkle and Papert's *painter*, the home becomes a living kaleidoscope, a complex composition in continual transformation:

> At the heart of [an] … analysis of consumption is the valorization of the skilled and creative consuming subject who, far from being duped by a consumer society manufacturing 'false needs', is conceptualized rather as a *bricoleur.* These creative subjects of contemporary consumption actively use objects, signs, images, indeed whatever material comes to hand, to constitute themselves, their lives and their identities. (Cwerner & Metcalfe, 2003, p. 230)

In the process of home making and shaping occupants are everyday bricoleurs, altering the existing fabric within their means and imagination, and placing pre-owned (and new) furniture; creating compositions of space, place and circulation. Home making is not only about what we do to our homes, but what our homes do to us. Rather than a "haven for the self", Miller observes the home to be "a turbulent sea of constant negotiation" (2001, p. 4), with people, objects, spaces, rituals and habits, and ultimately with our own identity. This was true for many study participants and helped build a picture of the relationship between the occupant and home-making and changing behaviour. The case study also revealed who among them had the characteristics of a bricoleur, whether designer or non-designer, DIYer or hire-renovator.

Categories of DIY

This section has begun to address the individual search for a perfect lifestyle in a world of media influence, social pressure and personal expectation. Atkinson identifies four different categories or types of DIY activity—Pro-active DIY, Reactive DIY, Essential DIY and Lifestyle DIY. In the last category, Atkinson suggests a connection to a sustained, transformative and proactive way of living:

> Lifestyle DIY … home improvement or building activities undertaken as emulation or conspicuous consumption, and where the use of one's own labour is by choice rather than need (although professional input, usually in the form of design advice, is often included). (2006, p. 3)

Atkinson attributes the "commodification of skills … [to] economics of global-scale mass production" (2006, p. 5), and repositions DIY as a "leisure pursuit or lifestyle choice" (ibid.), rather than a way of being able to make something cheaper than it could be purchased. In this context, creating something on a DIY basis may be more expensive than buying imported products, depending on the raw materials and components required.[181] Atkinson further ascribes changing perceptions of DIY to the media and specifically television makeover shows, portraying "DIY as no longer an end in itself, but of secondary importance to a necessarily ephemeral end result" (2006, p. 5).

Although useful, the description of *lifestyle DIY* is problematic, and the author admits there are contradictions. On the one hand DIY is interpreted as a leisure pursuit, and on the other it focuses on the (sometimes temporary) end result or goal. Equally it can be a way to spend one's time being creative and original or simply assembling parts, a way to satisfy needs [182] or to achieve desires.[183] Atkinson refers to the development of DIY as a *democratising agency*:

> Giving people independence and self-reliance, freedom from professional help, encouraging the wider dissemination and adoption of modernist design principles, providing an opportunity to create more personal meaning

[181] For example, a piece of furniture or kitchen cabinetry.
[182] For example, additional space to accommodate an expanding family.
[183] For example, a bigger living area, newer kitchen, better garden, or even the ideal home.

> in their own environments or self-identity, and opening up previously gendered or class-bound activities to all. (2006, pp. 5-6)

With advances in technology allowing for greater distribution competence between tools and people, there is no longer the need for people to call in tradesmen or builders to complete unlicensed work on their homes. Although, significantly, where television programmes, magazines and even the digital DIY communities provide guidance on design, it is insufficient for projects that require site-specific solutions; bespoke design thus remains the domain of professionals. If DIY were *fully* democratic, then design activity would be integral with and accessible to this amateur realm.

DIY *in principle* allows people to take control of their own projects, budget, timescale, extent of work, resources, aesthetic and functional goals, and embrace the creative, collaborative and physical nature of the activity. However, as revealed through the experiences of participants, DIY *in practice* presents many competence-based challenges depending upon the complexity of the work. Although individual tasks or small jobs present homeowners with relatively simple decisions, with decorating this might be the preference for a single paint colour, with complex tasks like re-modelling a kitchen, however, this can involve making decisions about circulation, daily eating/food preparation practices and the requirements of each member of the family.

Significant re-modelling, such as structural alteration of a building, may have far reaching consequences; the temporary de-habitation of the space, bespoke construction elements, the need for planning approval and scheduling external contractors required by law[184]. The expertise required for more significant decisions about spatial rearrangement remains the domain of architects. The ability to optimise man-made spaces, maximize planning opportunities and provide effective built compositions, therefore, *mostly* requires formal design training.

[184] For example, electricians and plumbers.

In summary, with reference to wider views on DIY as an amateur approach to making or creating something, creative activity is situated beyond the usual disciplinary and business boundaries of the design office. The frameworks and models reviewed in this section have yielded links between creativity, bricolage and *doing* (DIY activity), and further to encompass the remaining threads *context* (external influence/motivations), *having* (internal influence/motivations), and *design* (design process/practice).

3.6 Dreamshapers

The dream homes whose images and accolades are transmitted through media messages, and those featured in advertising spin offering a better lifestyle, frequently take shape at the hand of an architect.[185] The imagination and application of both architect and client, together with the input of builder(s), ultimately transforms a dream of living into a different reality.

Bespoke homes created by architects are reproduced in mass media as examples of dream homes, and although they may be the manifestation of their client's aspirations, needs and wants, and reflect the client's *Lebensstil* they are displayed to others often unable to exercise the same choice (section 3.2). The work of designers on exclusive or luxury projects, in conjunction with exposure through television programmes and media publications, establishes expectations of *dream homes* that are beyond the reach of many homeowners. This way, a few who manage to realise their dreams, give shape to the dreams of many. Through glossy homes publications and television programmes like GD[186], both buildings *and* homeowners are shaped in the pursuit of a dream home.

[185] Acknowledging the input of other design professionals, including interior designers and landscape architects.
[186] GD also presents projects without architectural input, where the imagination and creativity of the homeowners shapes the home.

Design as a discipline

In this study, creative process is identified through the practice of DIY, and differentiated from design process, identified through the practice of professional design activity. Design professionals have at their disposal formalised training, skills and experience and are subject to specific requirements in the provision of their service to others.[187] DIYers working on the home who also draw on their skills and experience have far fewer restrictions on what they create and how. Unlike a design professional, the DIY practitioner is free to explore ideas or make decisions based on their own resources,[188] rather than the limitations imposed by external engagement.

For the purpose of thesis clarity, design is considered a commercial practice, bounded by discipline, and defined through tacit knowledge. In contrast, home improvement is considered a leisure activity that allows entirely for the client's creative input. Design here is interpreted as a professionally organised practice focused on the transformation of ideas into conceptualised form and later into realised space; a "process driven by a vision that provides the direction towards a solution" (Rolfstam & Buur, 2012, p. 72). Design then, intentionally influences human lives, works towards positive change and anticipates improved outcomes (H. Simon, 1998).

When designers operate in a commercial environment, a profession or business, cumulative skills and expertise are utilised in the most viable, cost efficient way to bring about change. Quantifiable resources, time and money,[189] limit value appreciation in other resources,[190] and ultimately design practice has been channeled towards engagement with manufactured, natural and financial capital.[191] Efficiencies of practice typically limit opportunities for deeper exploration of client

[187] For example, consultants, client(s) and/or stakeholders.
[188] For example, time, money, expertise or labour.
[189] For example time and money
[190] For example, human and social
[191] Aspects of the *five capitals system* are discussed in section 4.2.

needs, desires, capabilities, interests, rituals, and habits or for finding ways to facilitate client visions of future selves. Modern living reflected through the media against a commercial backdrop of designer goods, has adopted *lifestyle* as an appealing mirage of changing ideals; like the home, lifestyle has become a commodity linked with design.

Designers, however, have yet to take on the complex challenge of influencing lifestyle through more comprehensive involvement in home modification, or even fully embracing the notion that "design constitutes being human" (Krippendorff, 2006, p. 74), and being human is to seek a more balanced, fulfilling and holistic way of living. With the increasing popularity and economic force behind DIY as a serious leisure activity, it is important to identify new opportunities for designers to positively contribute to self-build projects. Additionally, reflecting on the bigger picture concern about *unsustainable* lifestyles, there is pressure on the design professions to contribute to more sustainable development or build practices. Investigating the relationship between of design, DIY and home-based consumption practices emphasize the need to know what is a *lifestyle by design*?

Design as a process

Although Cross, Schön, Krippendorf and Dorst all provide invaluable interpretations of design as a "highly developed form of thinking" (Lawson & Dorst, 2009, p. 88), and specific type of activity pertinent to this study, it is clear there is no clear consensus on the definition of design. Exemplifying this, Dorst identifies different *modes* describing design as a process through two paradigms, positivism and constructionism, of which, the action-centric perspective is most applicable to this research (Dorst & Dijkhuis, 1995; Schön, 1983)(Figure 3.24[192]). Dorst's paradigm model identifies designers by rationality or reflection, according to knowledge, problem type and process, bearing a strong resemblance to Le Loarne's creativity matrix.

[192] Adapted from: Dorst & Dijkhuis, 1995, p. 263.

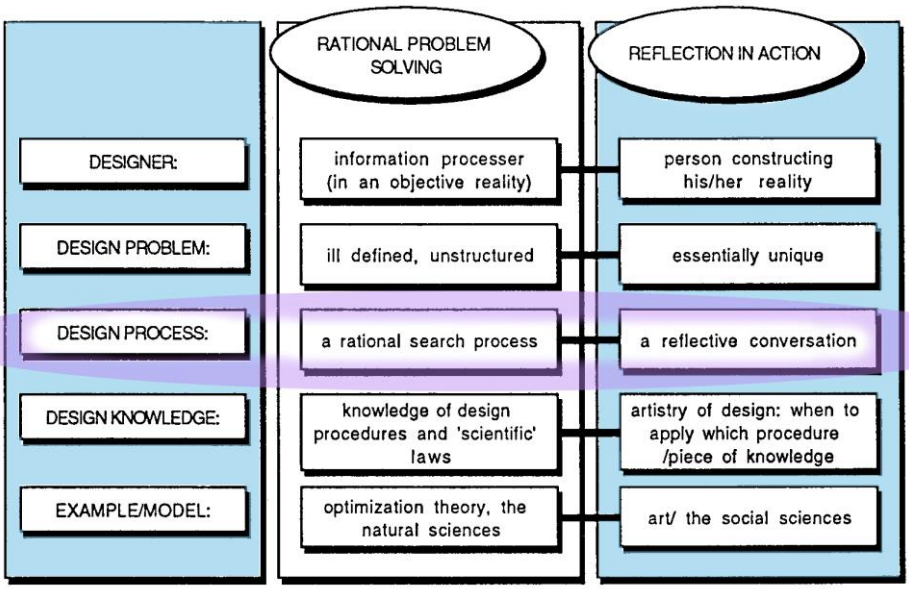


Figure 3.24: Two paradigms for describing design activity

Given the orientation towards a reflection-in-action approach, this study primarily adopts Ken Friedman's perspective on design as:

> A process that involves creating something new (or reshaping something that exists) for a purpose, to meet a need, to solve a problem or to transform a less desirable situation to a preferred situation … even though we may not yet be able to articulate the preferred situation, this definition covers most forms of design. (2002, p. 4)

In defining design, Friedman also references an interpretation of design process as *an event flow* essentially comprising two steps—(re)search and practice (Fuller, 1969). Design, specific to this thesis, is as an action oriented, dynamic and reflective process, a purposeful way of planning and executing a project, as opposed to a product or output.

Design as a commodity

The media, retail and real estate industries have muddied the definition waters further, using *design* to signify stylistic quality or through referring to *designer* influence on products, places and services (Figure 3.25).

Images are often architecturally styled bespoke homes containing luxury fixtures or fittings, *designer* furnishings and appliances, original artworks and high quality finishes, but equally many are more accessible versions of indulgence using more affordable components (Hopkins, 2007). These polished images, and more modest derivatives modeled on them, intentionally induce the consumption of *designer* style material goods.

Figure 3.25: WA real estate marketing – typical references to design

Although the *influence* of designers is identifiable, certainly in home improvement and home ware retail, the use of the terms design or designer, as for lifestyle, is extensive, vague and misleading. The distance between professional design input and design as a value-adding label has, partly as a result of media and advertising promotion, narrowed so greatly that many people do not value the services of a

design professional, instead choosing to copy examples in the public domain[193] and take a *design-it-yourself* approach.

Design expertise

The terms *expertise* or *expert* are usually applied to those in society who have reached or exceeded a benchmark of achievement in their chosen profession, although the media applies the terms more freely (section 3.3). Carr builds on the premise that expertise is a way of knowing, but extends an anthropological interpretation of an expert to include someone who interacts, participates, produces, consumes and dissipates specialised knowledge, such as design:

> If expertise is enactment, it is also fundamentally a process of becoming rather than a crystallized state of being or knowing…. The premise that expertise is not something one has but something one does has been demonstrated by anthropologists of science and technology… and anthropologists who study professionals … apprentices … intellectuals … and ritual specialists. (2010, p. 26)

Expertise in design is most frequently associated with designers in professional practice, and although they may benefit from innate abilities that facilitate creativity, such as a *visual memory*, organised training and the application of learning through on-the-job experience are the foundation of their expertise. Crawford makes a strong connection between knowing about the world theoretically and knowing about the world from deep immersion in day-to-day experiences. The same may be true of developing expertise in building and construction, where learning comes through doing and knowing (2009).

Sennet, like Crawford, reveres true craftsmanship, concluding expertise is learned *through* the focused development of both practical and intellectual skills, "beginning as bodily practices" (2008, p. 10). Developing and maintaining design expertise is considered here as an active and ongoing process, where knowledge resides in and is developed through the practice of both mind and hand.

[193] For example, magazine clippings and display homes.

Active citizens and transformation design

Applying Carr's notion of expertise as enactment—becoming and knowing through doing—to the wider population who are increasingly shaping their own lives, broadens the horizons for community engagement with the process of design (Jegou & Meroni, 2008; Meroni, 2007). The interface between the public as creative stakeholders and design professionals is coming under pressure as wider debates on design focus less on the *object* of design,[194] effectively re-mapping the traditional boundaries of design practice (Friedman, 2012; Fry, 2008). Taffe and Barnes argue that although "designers can rapidly propose and sift potential ideas because they do not have an emotional attachment to the context for design" (2009, p. 9), increased participatory practice between designers and non-design stakeholders could dispel "perceived status barriers" (ibid.), and increase opportunities for greater creativity in design.

A shift in focus has placed design as a sector in a wider social, environmental and economic context, as an enabler or "'mean' supporting the emergence of a more collaborative, sustainable and creative society and economy" (Sangiorgi, 2010, p. 2), and as "an attitude not a profession" (Chick & Micklethwaite, 2011, p. 24) feeding movements such as design activism.[195] In order to move beyond the restrictions of disciplines so that design practice is accessible to everyone, Sangiorgi believes the design profession needs to adopt *transformational aims* and acknowledge "citizens as 'agents' and their active role in the creation of wellbeing" (2010, p. 4). By engaging with transformative practices and principles, she feels, designers can embrace communities, citizen groups and individuals as creative *partners* in any process of conscious change.

The UK Design Council report, 'Red Paper 02: Transformation Design', outlines an approach to socially progressive, human-centred design service as one that may be

[194] Such as the production of a product or service.

[195] For example, where design has been "looking at existing examples of inventiveness among 'ordinary people' to solve daily problems related to housing, food, ageing, transports and work" (Sangiorgi, 2010, p. 2). Here are cues for design to gain knowledge from DIY as an everyday creative practice.

confronting for designers (Sangiorgi, 2011). This includes "the loss of personal creative authorship", and accepting that "creativity happens in run-time, not just in design time … [so] design becomes a Pro-Am community" (Burns, Cottam, Vanstone, & Winhall, 2006, p. 26).

The main characteristics of *transformation design*, according to the Design Council report, bring design and use practices closer together, in effect supporting the design anthropology approach to the relationship between designing, making, using and producing (Figure 1.6). Key aspects of transformation design also provide avenues for exploring a wider interpretation of design process within the scope of this study, especially where it:

> Builds on the reality that 'everybody is a designer in everyday life': that we all make dozens of informal design decisions every day … [including] how we organise our houses … [and] asks designers to shape behaviour – of people, systems and organisations – as well as form.... [This necessitates] an ability to consider an issue holistically rather than reductively, [and] understand relationships as well as components. (Burns et al., 2006, p. 21)

Gideon Kossoff also moves design away from professional authorship, focusing instead on the very process of change, describing *transition design* as "a grassroots, collaborative and place based process that would draw on and integrate knowledge and skills from many different fields" (2011, p. 1).[196]

Supporters of both transformation design and transition design highlight the benefits of embracing the transformation *of behaviour* more closely in design practice, suggesting that *facilitating* change may be more valuable than providing solutions (Sangiorgi, 2010). This research acknowledges these benefits, challenging current goal-oriented architectural practice that is "assertion based rather than evidence based" (Michlewski, 2008, p. 387), and geared towards workable solutions. Architects and design-build companies frequently deliver bespoke housing with *nothing more to do*, ultimately aiming for client satisfaction at the

[196] This may be interpreted as a hybrid style approach to design, where a collage of skills and knowledge are brought together.

moment of handover (RIBA, 2008).[197] According to the architects interviewed during the study, there is no formal review process to monitor whether the new house meets the client needs/wants in the long-term.

The principles of transformation design, which acknowledge the participation of *active citizens*, provide useful insight on DIY home improvement. Through comparing both DIY and traditional design approaches to home improvement projects, similarities/differences in the process of planning and materialising change were identified. Taking into consideration the strengths of both approaches, and the recommendations in the 'Red Paper 02' report, a closer relationship between design and use would emerge as a collaborative transformation practice.

Democratic design

Tracy Potts observes that we are "witnessing the democratisation of interior design" (2006, p. 156), and based on the message from lifestyle media, she extends this to broader applications of design, observing it is now *possible* for anyone to be a designer.[198] Potts remarks on an increasing tendency to use interior decoration as a measure of accountability in judging someone's decision making ability, class, financial status, compositional skill and creativity in the way they decorate their environment:

> Our homes betray us; our design successes – and failures – communicate facts pertaining to elements of our innermost thoughts, beliefs and selves … scheme[s] of domestic orientation organized by the inhabitant-turned-designer as 'active engineer of atmosphere' (2006, p. 157).

Extending this, Shove's work on the CCP study explores the effort and creativity of *ordinary* human agents in *weaving together* the complexities of practice with the objects and activities of everyday living (2005). Design is explored through DIY, domestic practices and consumption in two key research projects funded and undertaken in the UK: 'Designing and consuming: objects, practices and

[197] Here delivering a new or renovated building is considered a solution to the clients' problem or need, where *nothing to do* is promoted by real estate industry as a primary goal of property purchase.
[198] The rise in accessibility of information about style, taste and design providing conditions in which everyone can design, accords with views of transformation design advocates.

processes'[199] and 'Sustainable Domestic Technologies: Changing technology and convention'.[200] These projects are integral to 'The design of everyday life', a key text exploring the connection between design and consumption, "the relation between 'having' and 'doing', and on how the material configuration of the home relates to the accomplishment of variously valued forms of social practice" (Shove, 2007, p. 23). Although discussing the sociology of objects in use such as DIY tools, Shove introduces the concept of a *materiality of practice* in relation to everyday life, where "ordinary objects are extraordinarily important in sustaining and transforming the details and designs of everyday life" (2007, p. 2).

In spite of increasing academic interest in this area, there remain areas of design and consumption that are yet to be satisfactorily investigated, especially in the Australian context:

> Less often addressed … [is how] activities of making within a design process can help establish a relation between past and current practices of people *as well as* future possibilities of practice. (Gunn & Donovan, 2012b, p. 123)

During research for this study, DIY home renovation was identified as a practice-related activity falling into these "gaps and cracks that lie between the tracks of disciplinary development" (Shove, 2007, p. 10), specifically in design, material culture and sociology. Issues such as how the skill and competence gained through *doing* contributes to the design process are discussed in relation to participant data in chapter 4. Direct involvement with the design process by the *inhabitant-turned-designer*, specifically through engaging creatively with DIY projects is found to be transformative; designing in the context of home renovation is seen as a dynamic process that can be rewarding, enlightening, liberating and contributing to self-discovery.

Although literature identifies design within a wide field of creativity, design as applied in this study specifically reflects the professionally organised practice of

[199] Award no. RES-154-25-0011 funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) March 2007.
[200] Award no. RES-332-25-007 funded by the ESRC.

architecture. Architects in particular have specific skills relating to the composition of buildings and built spaces, and experience in realising ideas[201] using an established decision-making process (Simon, 1998). The dominant message conveyed by the media is that professional design *outputs* are accessible without the need of architectural training, yet outputs frequently transpire as a superficial *designer* aesthetic without contributing substantially to the way people live. Findings reveal a much broader understanding of what it is to practice design in relation to the configuration and aesthetics of the home, lifestyle and DIY projects.

The thread *design* subsequently focuses on issues relating to the *process* by which traditional professional practitioners, chiefly architects, apply their training and *designerly ways* of thinking and knowing to the home environment (Chick & Micklethwaite, 2011; Cross, 2006). This thread also reflects on the extent to which people without design training apply design thinking and/or creativity when engaging in home renovation.

3.7 Dreamers and dream makers

At the centre of the dreamscape are the individuals, couples and families who dream of making improvements to their homes, and in doing so anticipate a different and therefore *better* way of living.[202] Some remain dreamers, observing friend's homes, houses for rent or sale, homes on television or in magazines. Some people already feel truly *at home*, they are content with both their surroundings and lifestyle, and have no intention to realise any momentary daydreams of change.

It is the homeowners whose dreams of improvement are materialised in some form that provide the focus for this research. Some people move house or have one

[201] Ideas here realised as conceptual images seeking to define the abstract dreams a client has of a leading a better life.

[202] For whatever reason individuals seek to make changes to their surroundings, there is no evidence to suggest people would purposefully make changes to their homes or lives, which would result in a *worse* living experience. Even if in the short-term a living situation becomes more inconvenient or challenging, such as living in a caravan while renovating or living in the mess, the long-term goal is to be in a better situation–be it a socio-economic position, general standard of living/comfort, or to suit personal preferences.

built, some become hire renovators and organise contractors to complete improvements to their current home, and others self-navigate their way through a DIY project, making design decisions and taking on the build work themselves.

Dream making practices

DIY home renovation has been introduced as an activity that involves more than just shopping for materials such as paint, tools and equipment (*having*), it is an activity that combines using, making, producing and doing practices, and engages with creativity and/or design process. It is also an activity that has become increasingly important to homeowners and homemakers who wish to take greater control over their lives, resulting in a shift from work-based identity to home-centredness and social identity (Franklin, 2007; A. Tomlinson, 1990).[203]

According to Clarke, the modern home has become a site of social aspiration, a place subject to continual transformation in a way that serves to primarily express the occupant's individuality:

> The ideal home, as used to influence the construction of the actual home, becomes an internalized vision of what other people think of one.... The house objectifies the vision occupants have of themselves in the eyes of others and as such it becomes an entity and process to live up to, give time to, show off to.... It is an interiorized image of the other that can actually be worked on and fed into the aspirations and labour of the occupants. So the proliferation of home decoration and the popularization of design has become a key, contemporary component of a relationship that was never simply between an internal private sphere and an external public sphere, but a more complex process of projection and interiorization that continues to evolve. (2001, pp. 42-3)

Clarke's observations are applicable to the more ambitious DIY practice of home renovation, and further, that the *ideal* image of home—the dreamspace—reveals "limitations of the materiality of 'real' homes" (2002, p. 27), and serves as a proactive force, motivating individuals to take action.

[203] Here control-seeking behaviour can be linked with life choice and life chance as defined in the lifestyle paradigm, where individuals exercise choice to engineer a shift in their socio-economic situation, refer section 3.2.

Dream maker choices

A doctoral research study conducted in Brisbane during 2006-7 explored the housing renovation choices of 352 respondents, taking an economics focus (Peng, 2009). The method and findings of a precedent study, PAHR, have been cross-compared with the method and findings for this survey. The PAHR survey is more specific to renovation than the culture, class and taste focus of the AECP national study, however, Peng's findings indicate that social pressure and *maintenance of front* is a strong motivator for home improvement activity. This concurs with findings of the AECP study; it echoes Maslow's need for individual self-esteem, and touches on Elster's observation that *others* influence both rational and irrational choice (1999). Peng suggests the higher one's social dependence, the greater the likelihood of investing time and money in renovation, such that "an individual's attention to others' social standards may reinforce their own escalation of commitment" (2009, p. 227).

Where the participants in this study gave the main reasons for decorating as time, money, skill and enjoyment, the PAHR study asked more broadly about reasons for renovation. The PAHR study found that almost half (46.5%) renovated for functional needs, over one-fifth (22.7%) for *lifestyle pursuit* and less that ten percent (7.8%) for investment only, although the label *lifestyle pursuit* is not defined anywhere in that thesis. Whether respondents were *hire-renovators* who employ others to do the work, or *DIY-renovators* who do the work themselves, the majority in both categories renovate for functional needs. The main reasons given for hiring others included offering more creative ideas/design, to guarantee better quality, and to ensure a quicker completion time. The main reasons for taking a DIY approach include the perception of ease, the availability/affordability of tools and the possession of skills, all of which imply previous experience with DIY[204] and thus a practice kept alive through repeated performance.

[204] For example, the ownership of relevant tools.

Peng concludes that renovators are heavily influenced by social and psychological factors that frequently blur rational judgement, this very often leads to an escalation of cost by as much as double the budget. Peng's study also reflects on the influence of external forces such as the media, observing that "if individuals were encouraged to believe they were able to renovate they are more likely to do so" (2009, p. 143), and the economic benefits (to industry) of raising the householder's level of perceived self-performance. Importantly, the perceived level of accomplishment with home renovation projects is reported to be statistically significant in terms of continual engagement with the activity.[205]

Dream maker expectations

According to Clarke, the *dream homes* portrayed in lifestyle magazines act as "conceptual and value-laden configurations informing or undermining everyday household decisions" (2002, p. 26), and participant resource material the promise of easy, simple, quick and basic projects is used to draw people into change-making behaviour (refer section 3.3). A number of studies report on the misleading nature of media in relation to DIY, including a UK survey reporting that ninety-four percent of respondents thought TV programmes made DIY look too easy and quick and that most television renovations shows were viewed with suspicion (Marsh, 1998).[206]

Advances in the technological development of products and tools available in hardware stores, traditionally a marked dominated by tradesmen, has also increased the ease of use for novice DIYers and females, and decreased the skill required by users to handle or operate them. This *distributed competence* between human and non-human, where the design of tools has reduced the specific knowledge required by the human DIYer to operate them, increases the range of people who can undertake a prescribed task (Shove, 2007).

[205] For example, competent DIYers are more likely to engage in continual transformation of home, as are amateur DIYers who accept optimal rather than maximal outcomes.
[206] 'Tea and DIY–Two Great British Obsessions' (1997-98).

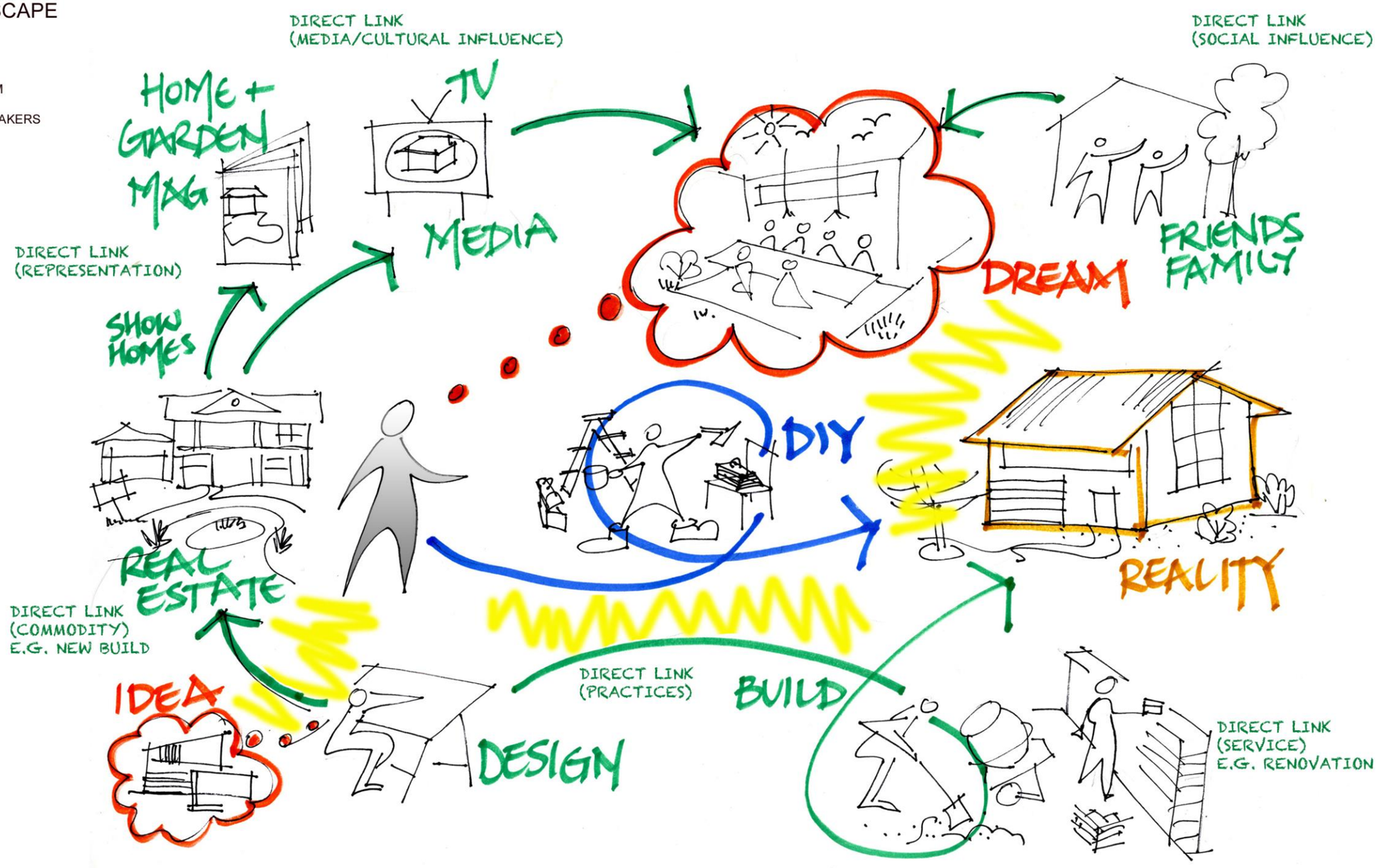
Although the distributed competence here refers mainly to the practical build tasks of a DIY project, and whilst acknowledging product design has helped bridge the gap between professional and amateur builder, everyday competence in terms of the design process remains largely unexplored. As a *dream shaper,* it is the architect (engaged by a client) who designs and oversees both the design-and-build process, with the builder effectively in the role of *dream maker*. The homeowner as dreamer *and* dream maker is presented with a choice, whether to be a client (a hire-renovator) or a client-builder hybrid (DIY renovator), yet the interface with dream shaping is less clearly identified once the designer is removed from the equation.

Mapping the alternative options or choices available to the homeowner as they engage with the dreamscape described in chapter 3, reveals some of the gaps and cracks introduced earlier (section 3.6) in relation to disciplinary boundaries (Figure 3.26). The sketch dreamscape illustrates identifies potential for vastly different outcomes as the transformation between ideal and real occurs, the distance between the *pro* and *am* approaches to imagining and constructing the dreamscape made visible. Where the homeowner is the client of a commercially organised residential design and build project, the architect views the client's dream through the lens of their own professional and personal experience. This view is tempered by the restrictions placed on designers trying to shape dreams due to the client's budget, project timescale and capability of the builder selected for the work. The degree of correlation between the client's dream and the designer's interpretation of it depends, according to participant Fleetwood, an architect, on the designer's ability to ask the right questions, and for the client to articulate their ideas clearly. The homeowner here remains a dreamer, the process of creating/making/producing the dream has been outsourced to others.

Where the homeowner and architect develop a tight brief and communicate effectively, the reality should meet or, according to participant Jasper, an urban designer, exceed the client's expectations on completion, delivering a maximal rather than optimal living environment (refer section 3.5).

SKETCH DREAMSCAPE

THE DREAM
THE DREAMSELLERS
THE DREAMSPACE
CONSTRUCTING THE DREAM
THE DREAM SHAPERS
THE DREAMERS + DREAM MAKERS



GAPS OR CRACKS IN DREAMSCAPE

COMMERCIAL LINKS – ('PRO') CLIENT WITH RESIDENTIAL BUILDING INDUSTRY

NON-COMMERCIAL LINKS – ('AM') CLIENT WITH HOME

Figure 3.26:
Sketch dreamscape - gaps and cracks

Given the homeowner has engaged someone with superior expertise in design, he would *expect* an outcome that is beyond his/her own capability. The same applies to engaging a builder, the client could expect the construction to be quicker and higher quality than they are capable of to justify the cost commitment, however, this level of trust is also susceptible to exploitation (Moore, 1991).

Where the homeowner chooses a DIY approach they actively become dream makers. Both the journey and the outcome relies entirely on the DIYer's ability to visualise and develop ideas specific to the three-dimensional form of their home, and on their own competence, experience, expertise, skills, equipment and available resources. It is through limitations of the ability to design or to construct, or both, that there is likely to be a departure from the original dream,[207] in terms of the experience, outcome and/or resources. According to Peng's study, Australian homeowners frequently lived in the house during renovation and exceed their budget, often spending "twice as much on a renovation as they had expected … [yet] in the face of negative information, individuals try to rationalize their prior action by committing additional resources" (2009, p. 221). The upheaval and financial commitment necessarily become part of the journey towards a dream, a journey very much grounded in the reality of everyday life.

As an ongoing practice centred on competence, skill, and resourcefulness, DIY can be understood as a *lifestyle* choice for some people – the *dream makers*; they choose a way of living in the home that is subject to and the result of continual renewal. Several of the participants in this study practice DIY on a regular and sustained basis, a *serious* leisure pursuit in contrast to those who have careers in the building industry (Stebbins, 2007). Frequently the motivation for making improvements to the home is to achieve more suitably designed or more practical environment that better suits current practices or lifestyles, or create a new setting that will induce different practices or future lifestyles. For *dreamers*, this is made

[207] This is not to say the departure is always unwelcome, it may be positive especially for the bricoleur, refer section 3.5.

possible through the skill, experience, and resources of others, designers who take on the responsibility of shaping and making their dreams as real as possible.

In previous sections, the notion of a better lifestyle has emerged as a driver for change in the home, and therefore can be seen to underpin the activity of DIY as a way of dream making/shaping/transforming, and the motivation of people/homeowners who engage with it, either indirectly–the dreamers, or directly—the dream makers.

3.8 Dream tracery (threads)

This section outlines the tracery created by the five threads, key topics identified as they began to weave through the research landscape. The scope of each thread and the nature of their relationship subsequently transformed as findings emerged; the evolving interpretations are discussed in chapter 4.

Five threads

In setting out to investigate the relationship between design and home-improvement on a DIY basis and the creation of lifestyle, two topics were established early in the research that immediately required greater definition – that of *lifestyle* itself, and the *context* within which it could be understood. Three practice oriented topics were found to weave between lifestyle (both real and imagined) and its context as something to be created or transformed by individuals or groups; *design* as a skilled process planning for change, DIY or *doing* as a way of making and producing to bring about change, and *having* as the motivation or impetus driving change.

Prior to participant data analysis, the threads were assigned preliminary definitions:

- *Lifestyle* as *real* ways of living at home that are under continual transformation in the search of *ideal* ways of living—*the dream*.

- *Design* as a process followed by professional practitioners such as architects in shaping *dream spaces*.
- *Doing* as home renovation activity on a DIY basis, a practice focused on *constructing dreams*.
- *Having* as motivations generated by personal wants and needs, *the desire and drive behind seeking the dream life*.
- *Context* as external influences driving change-making activities primarily channeled through media and popular culture, *the dream sellers*.

The refinement of each thread was inherently iterative and often problematic, proving difficult to untangle and separate one thread from another. This persistent entanglement validates bricolage methodology as a way to map connections, embrace complexity and acknowledge multiple perspectives, and the design *with* anthropology frame.

Research inquiry concept

The research inquiry concept (Figure 3.27) articulates a hypothesis about the nature of the key topics emerging through research questions as threads and assists in mapping the relationship between them. The concept is based on the hypothesis that lifestyle implies a *mode* or way of living related to identity, class, taste and patterns of consumption (*having*), influenced by domestic practices such as DIY (*doing*), interior design/architecture in relation to home renovation (*design*). Additionally, the media has been strongly linked with the construction of lifestyle as a conceptual vehicle for transformation and anticipation of improved outcomes (*context*).

In formulating the inquiry concept and using it to test a hypothetical relationship between five core topics, this study primarily focused on constructing a valid understanding about lifestyle. The Australian DIY projects and participant data outlined in the next chapter have facilitated the exploration of this concept; how lifestyle is portrayed in the media, and how it is conceptualised and created or

realised in the home by a select cohort of individuals. The threads were developed as interpretive studies in their own right and each subject to ongoing metamorphosis, just as the lives of the participants had changed between the first contact made with them in anticipation of study involvement and the last interview or email catching up on progress. Participant lives and homes are changing even now, so too are each person's wants and needs, their personal aspirations and anticipation of future improvements to home life.

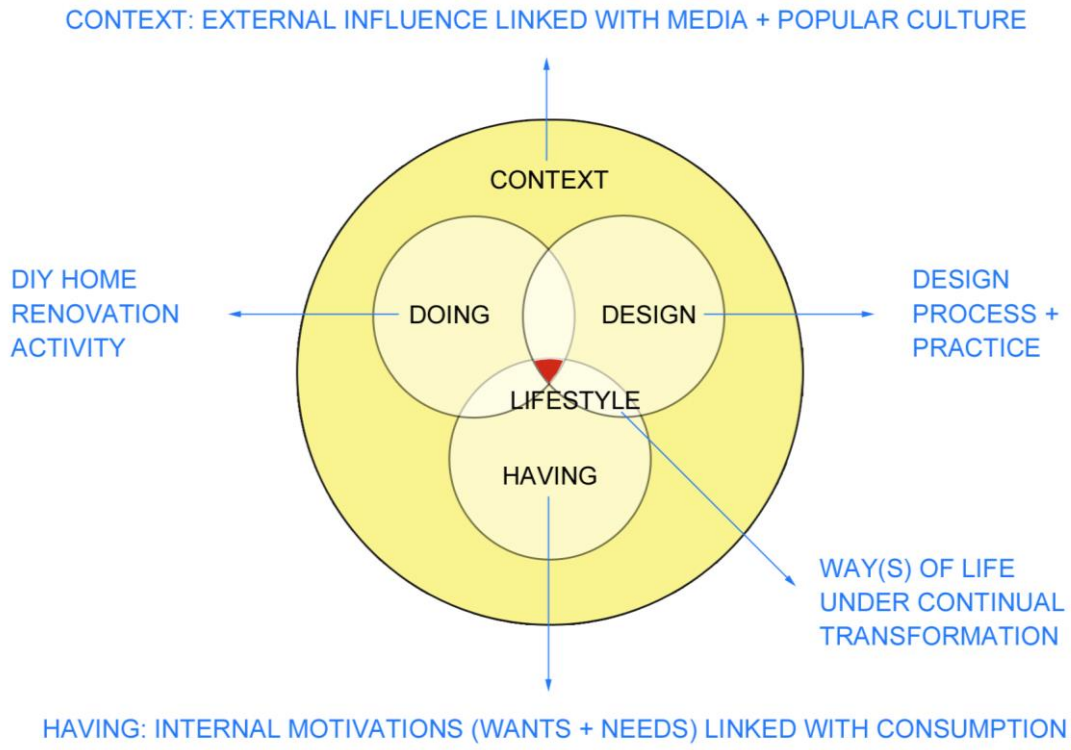


Figure 3.27: Inquiry concept with threads identified

In an era of "accelerated social and individual transformation" (Metzner, 2010, p. 2), the internal and external influences on the way people live are constantly shifting. Thus just as participant lives continually change, the thread relationship remains dynamic and active, motivated by issues of self-concept, self-image and self-place, driven by the aspiration *for* a better life, not simply one that *has* changed.

Everyday activities

The three threads representing everyday activities or practices—*having*, *doing* and *design*[208]— in constant flux, reflect the ebb and flow of tension between the real and dream lives of individuals, their needs and their wants or desires, and their capacity to move between them. A theory of practice model developed by Elizabeth Shove contends that "things are acquired, discarded and redesigned with reference to culturally and temporally specific expectations of doing *and* or having – not having alone" (2007, p. 37)(Figure 3.9). With home improvement, the influence of design and/or creativity has been found to be an equally significant expectation of homeowners,[209] although it is still driven strongly by consumption-oriented motivations and influences.

According to Elizabeth Sanders, "the contrast between consumptive and creative living reveal[s] … [that] currently we [field of design] are far better at serving consumption than we are at serving creativity" (2006, p. 7). Data collected for this study sheds light on the nature of lifestyle at the core of these activities, helping to determine if lifestyle is something *active*—influenced and modified these everyday activities or is something *passive*—influenced and modified by them. Furthermore, acknowledging Sanders' proposition that "beyond the edge of practice are the **Co-Creating Spaces** where designers and everyday people work collaboratively throughout the design and development process (2006, p. 12, emphasis in the original)",[210] the notion of lifestyle is considered within the everyday creative space of home (Figure 3.28[211]).

Writing on current changes to human-centred design, Sanders observes that the relationship between designers and non-designers or *everyday people*, has changed. Rather than being at the end of the design process as consumers or

[208] Also embracing creativity as an integral part of everyday practice.
[209] For example, in the next chapter, participants reveal that one of their expectations of 'ideal home' would be that it is 'well-designed'.
[210] Co-creation here typified by the broader DIY movement with the DIY community mostly operating in the domestic context (home), including on-line participation.
[211] Adapted from: Sanders, 2006, p.7).

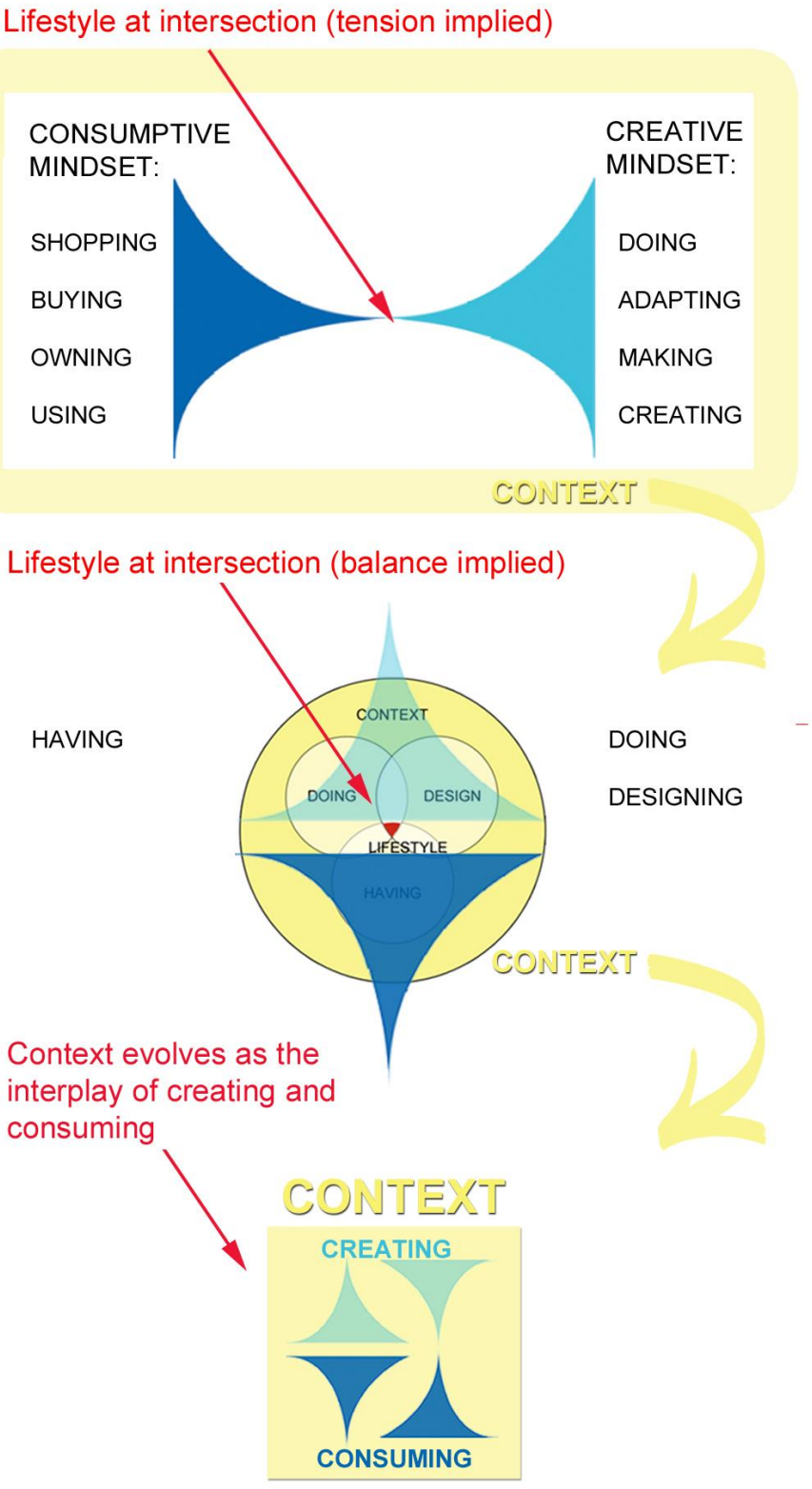


Figure 3.28: Consumptive and creative mindsets applied to study concept

users,[212] people are now demanding more "creative ways of living … they want to be 'creators' as well" (2006, p. 4). Sanders has identified a "developmental path" (2006, p. 8) of creativity spanning between doing and creating requiring different levels of expertise. However, it should be noted that Shove's 'doing' differs from the thread *doing,* which relates specifically to DIY home renovation work. Depending on the complexity of the task(s) involved, DIY may relate to any one of the four levels of creativity thus defined (Table 6[213]):

Table 6: Everyday creativity and new design spaces

Level of everyday creativity	Motivations	Requirements (creativity + skill)	Design spaces	Everyday activities
Arranging	To select and possess	Minimal or no interest in creativity Minimal or no domain experience	Design for consuming	Shopping, buying, owning and using
Doing	To get something done / to be productive	Minimal interest Minimal domain experience	Design for experiencing	Doing and using
Adapting	To make something on my own	Some interest Some domain expertise	Design for adapting	Adapting, modifying, or filling in
Making	To make something with my own hands	Genuine interest Domain experience	Co-creating/ Co-design	Making
Creating	To express my creativity	Passion Domain expertise	Co-creating/ Co-design	Creating

This study acknowledges that for some individuals DIY is part of an active search for meaning and experience through direct engagement with the physical world, and that creative freedom has been suppressed in an era when places, commodities and tools are almost entirely designed *for* us. By considering one of the ways in which people break from the confines of a designed world, DIY reveals how individuals are shaping, constructing or transforming their own everyday lives at home:

[212] According to Sanders, the last half-century has been dominated by a design space focused on consumption (2006).
[213] Adapted from: Sanders, 2006, pp. 9-11).

> In actuality DIY is, in most cases, really nothing but DIW – doing it with others … [which] highlights the practice of collaborating not only with humans, but also with non-human actors: materials and spaces endowed with a regenerative potential of their own. (Vannini & Taggart, 2013a, p. 2)

The threads, identified here as non-human actors and part of the *design space*, are traced through the participant data, weaving a new understanding about the modification of home and home life. The five key threads, together as *dream tracery*, are interlaced through the dreamscape, capturing a small microcosm of society at once transforming and being transformed.

3.9 Summary

The construction or realisation of dreams has been considered through the lens of DIY, a self-navigated approach to home improvement, a creative and transformative activity and a *serious* leisure pastime. As a set of practices, the change-making process of home improvement establishes a link between home context, *the dreamspace*, and the needs and wants of individuals seeking the perfect life, *the dream*, in a wider context of influence, the realm of *dreamsellers*.

Personal engagement with the fabric of home in order to alter aesthetics or functionality has been found to be *creative* and *transformative*. Home as the site of DIY activity, the notion of transformation and the broad spectrum of interpretations of creativity have been highlighted as key influences on the homeowners, as *dreamers* and *dream makers*.

Bricolage emerged as a connection between DIY home improvement activity as *doing* and other threads, and between design and use practices, subsequently interpreted as a type of creativity embracing resourcefulness and improvisation. Bricolage was found to be a conservative rather than radical approach to design, and an ad hoc process of tinkering; useful reference points for considering how designers might approach non-work projects, such as DIY at home, and how this compares to the creative input of non-designers.

During the evolution of the study, five topics or *threads* were found to wind though the literature with lifestyle at the core, setting up fields of inquiry in their own right, such as the meaning, extent and limitations of each within the frame of the study. Three of the threads appear in the research question as essential anchors of the investigation—design process as *design*, DIY building as *doing* and *lifestyle* as the concept under investigation. The other threads *context* and *having* were found to be important in contextualising the change-making behaviour at the centre of the study.

The research landscape, or *dreamscape*, as a collage of disciplines, fields and threads, reveals issues that are interlinked and constantly shifting in relation to each other. The multi-layered exploration has mapped a broad network of relationships, revealing insights on the complexity of shaping lifestyles, and the value of challenging conventional interpretations of design. The next chapter follows the dreamscape tracery through the lives, homes and DIY projects of the study participants.

Chapter 4: Dreamscape transformation

4:0 Overview

This chapter builds on the research landscape traced by the five key threads introduced in the previous section. The active transformation of dreams into reality is explored through the experiences and perceptions of participants as they reflect on lifestyle, home, DIY and their home renovation projects. For some participants, DIY is a lifestyle choice, an ongoing pursuit and a gateway to creativity. For others DIY is a taxing physical, psychological and financial ordeal, sometimes forced on them, and subsequently by choice a once only experience. For a few the *process* of transformation is overwhelming, the practices (*design* and *doing)* become a barrier rather than a gateway to achieving the changes desired, to making their dreams real.

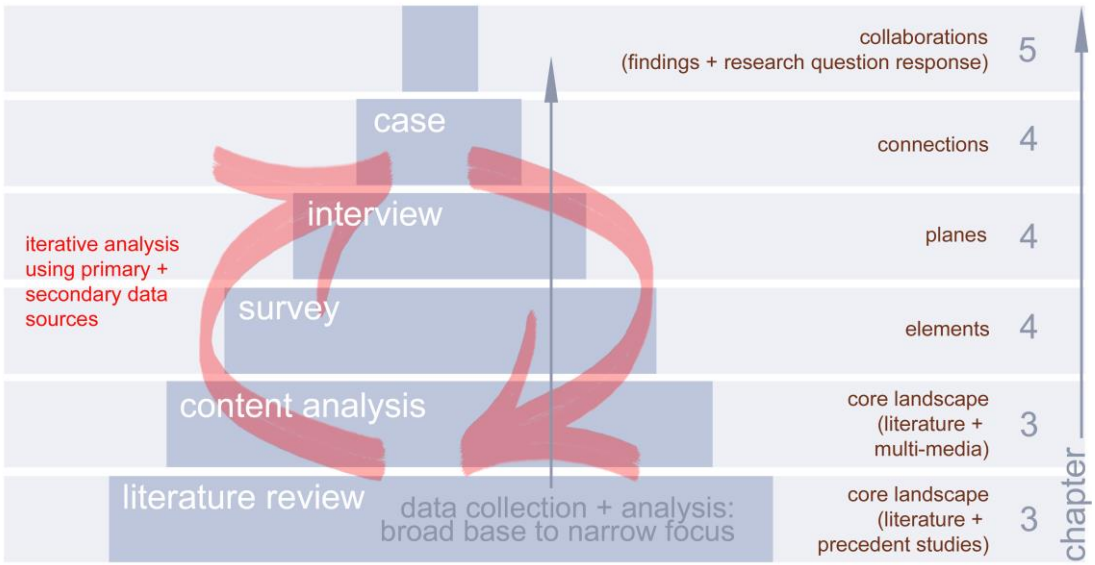


Figure 4.1: Defining the thread landscape

4.1 Mapping data

Bricolage as a methodology facilitated the iterative analysis of data as threads were explored through the survey, interview and case study stages of data collection (Figure 4.1). The subsequent mapping of primary and secondary data in relation to the inquiry concept provided both an organisational tool for analysis, and a graphic tool for scaffolding knowledge (Figure 4.2).

Thread formation

The scope of each thread, established in chapter 3, is here refined by the survey, interview and case study stages, and later revisited in the context of the inquiry concept and research questions (section 4.7). Three layers of information emerged from the data collection, analysis and synthesis stages – planes, elements and connections – together with collaborations *between* threads and *with* participants establishing a pattern of association and hybridisation (section 4.6).

Planes

The survey stage produced findings that were broadly categorised into five broad subject areas, each a identifying a layer of thread development. One main layer of significance, a conceptual *plane*, was identified for each thread:

- lifestyle - transformation
- context - home
- having - value
- doing - activity
- design - process

Elements

The interview stage findings revealed key issues emerging from each plane or subject area. The three most significant issues or conceptual *elements* located through the conversations assisted in building a more accurate definition of the thread in relation to this study:

- lifestyle - behaviour, identity, space
- context - history, social, emotional
- having - consumption, status + image, materials + clutter
- doing - disruption, skills + competence, roles + collaboration
- design - tools, vision + ideation, co-design

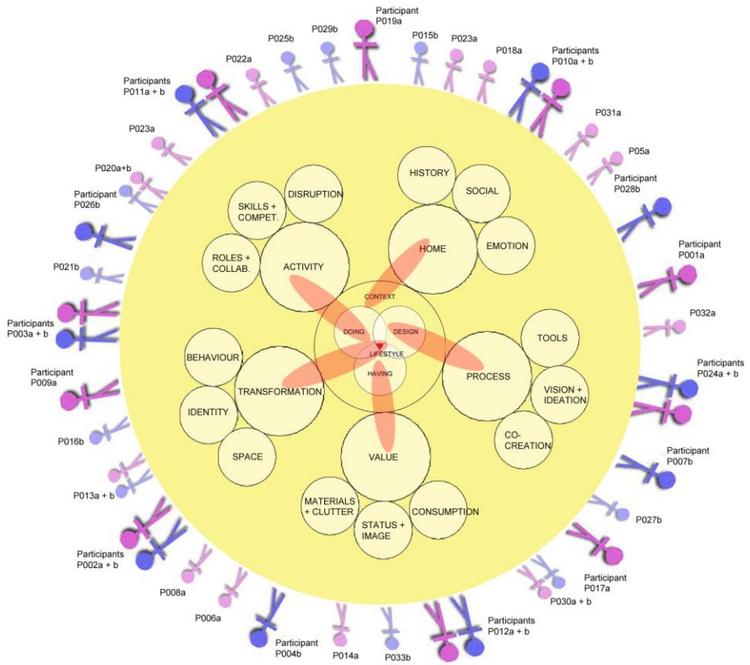
Connections

The case study findings revealed *connections* between the initial layers (planes) and subsequent issues (elements) and as such provide valuable connective tissue that builds the inquiry response. Lotus, Fleetwood and Jasper engaged with the research from the beginning, their situations, experiences and interpretations provided the most substantial contribution to chapter 4.

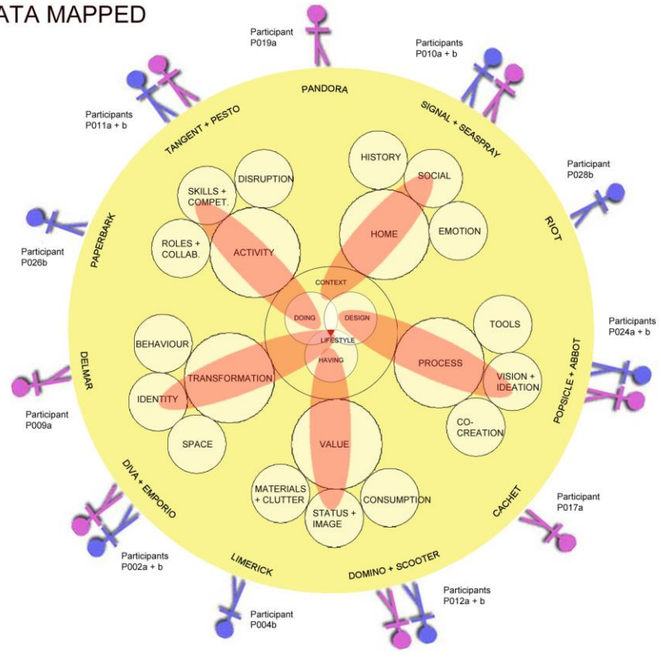
4.2 Lifestyle

Of the forty participants, a significant number occupied the gap between real and ideal home with weekends of continual domestic disruption, trips to hardware stores and supply depots and chipping away at half finished projects; modifying home to modify *the self* in pursuit of dream ways of living and the promise of future happiness. For some participants, their first makeover event was sufficient to re-frame their expectations and achieve an acceptable level of improvement, for others their search for the good life was a continual mission; for these career DIYers, transformation emerges as a way of life (Foege, 2013).

SURVEY DATA MAPPED
(PLANES)



INTERVIEW DATA MAPPED
(ELEMENTS)



CASE STUDY DATA MAPPED
(CONNECTIONS)

Development and exploration of dreamscape (secondary data) through participant data; final stage of analysis moves forward from connections to determine shared space between layers and dreamscape (collaborations)

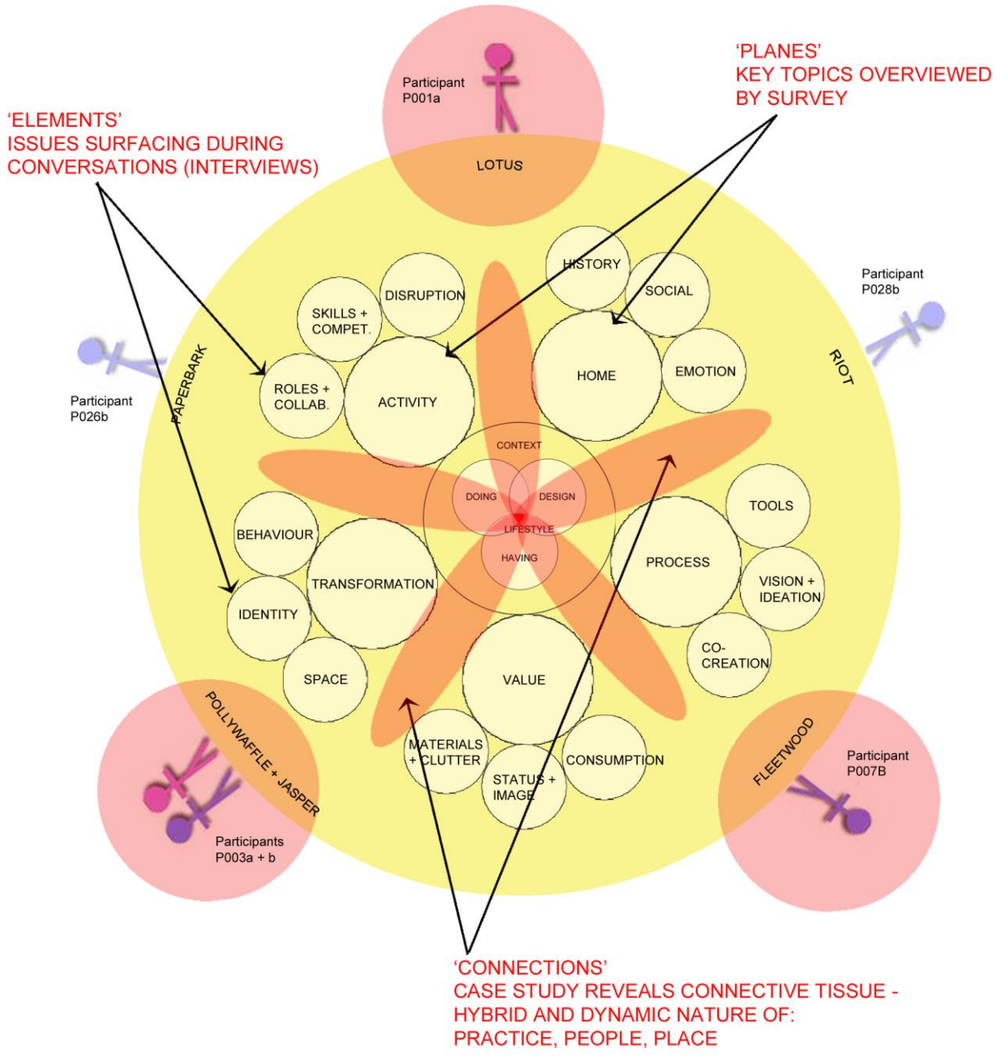
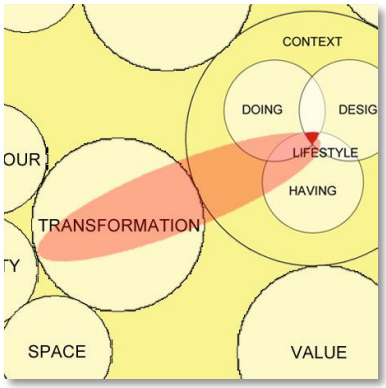


Figure 4.2:
Mapping of data collection and emergent layers

This section explores the thread *lifestyle* through participant data to determine:

(i) what factors influence or make up lifestyle,
(ii) what changes/transformation to home can improve lifestyle, and
(iii) what role does the design professional play in determining/identifying and transforming individual lifestyles.

Transformation



Lifestyle factors

The EC+LS survey for this study included two questions (G8 and G9) specifically using the term *lifestyle*, as no other precedent study addressed or questioned the term; the survey therefore gathered information on the most significant things that made up or influenced the participant's lifestyle, asking what changes to home would improve their lifestyle? Rather than seek a general definition of lifestyle, direct reference to physical aspects of home helped focus responses toward broadly exploring the role of design professions linked with development (Figure 4.3).

Even though the questions emphasized the word lifestyle in relation to the way participants lived at home, the responses were very broad ranging indicated that a wide range of factors influenced the way this group of people felt about their home life. The findings revealed that the most significant thing that make up or influence lifestyle was, for all participants, located in the social environment, specifically the immediate (kinship) group – family, friends and relationships. Personal interest/creativity factors were the next most significant, followed by issues relating

to the physical environment, time and money, mostly identified as a lack of resources in some way.

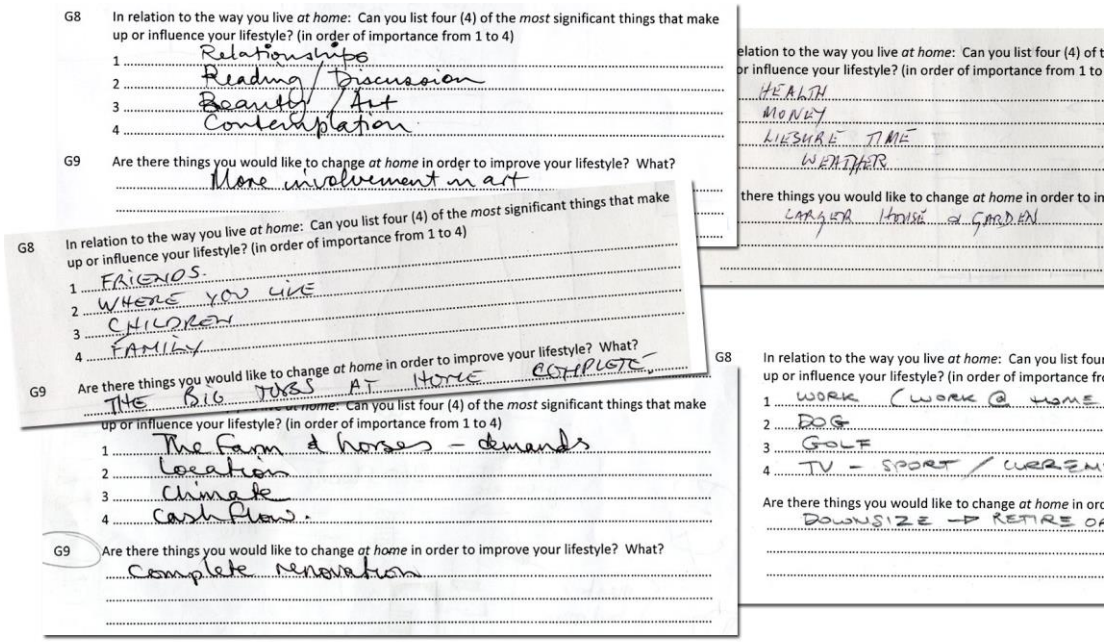
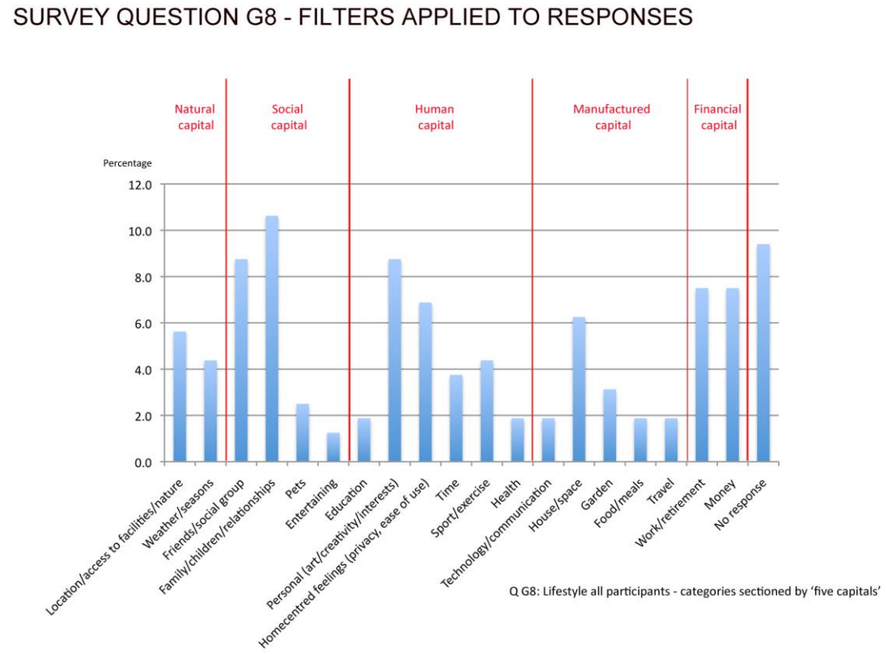


Figure 4.3: Survey question G8 and G9 sample responses

Responses to these questions were coded and subsequently filtered through two different lenses, sorted firstly into environmental categories, and secondly responding to the *five capitals value system* model of sustainable development. *Hotspots* on resulting charts locate the greatest intensity of responses identified by each of the filters, indicating the dominance of issues in similar spheres of interest, the social and personal environment (Figure 4.4), and human and social capital (Figure 4.5). These hotspots reflect patterns of spending identified in a 2012 report on the standard of living by the National Centre for Social and Economic Modeling (NATSEM),[214] with increases in the 'lifestyle' sector', suggesting "Australians have re-defined 'luxury' and … our spending habits represent a larger lifestyle" (B. Phillips, Li, & Taylor, 2012).

[214] The findings on the cost of living support the determination made annually in the *Human Development Index*, that Australians already enjoy a high standard of living, in spite of perceptions that basics are becoming less affordable.



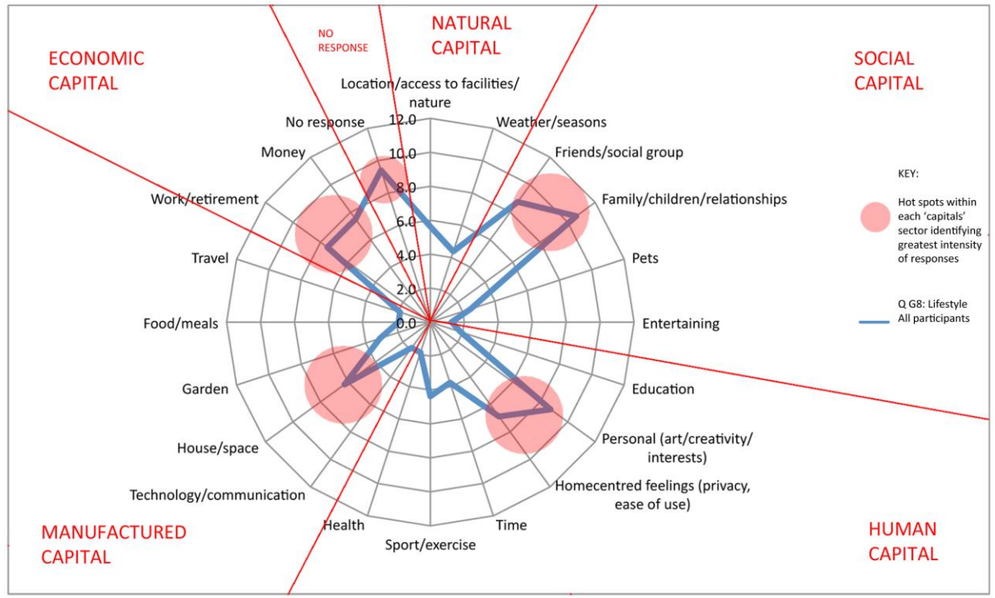
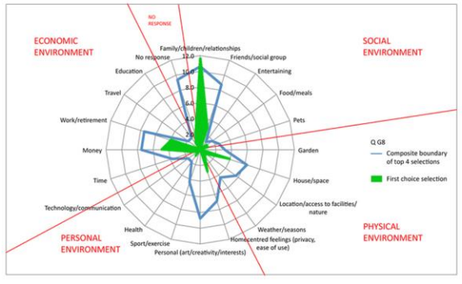
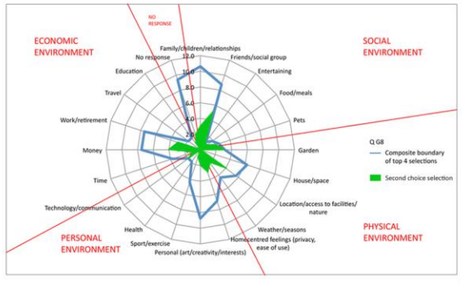


Figure 4.4:
Environmental category filter with 'hotspots'

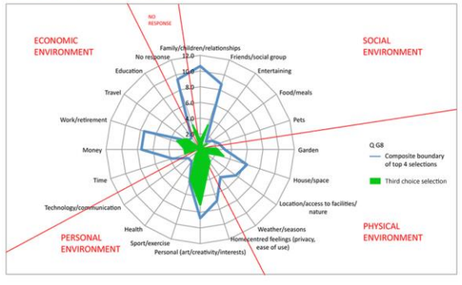
LIFESTYLE FACTORS: 1ST CHOICE



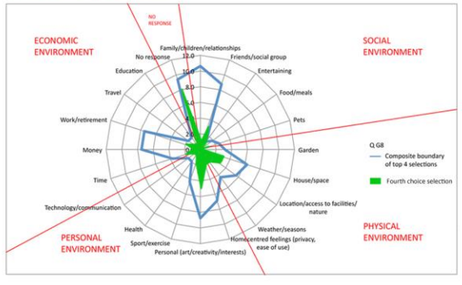
LIFESTYLE FACTORS: 2ND CHOICE



LIFESTYLE FACTORS: 3RD CHOICE



LIFESTYLE FACTORS: 4TH CHOICE



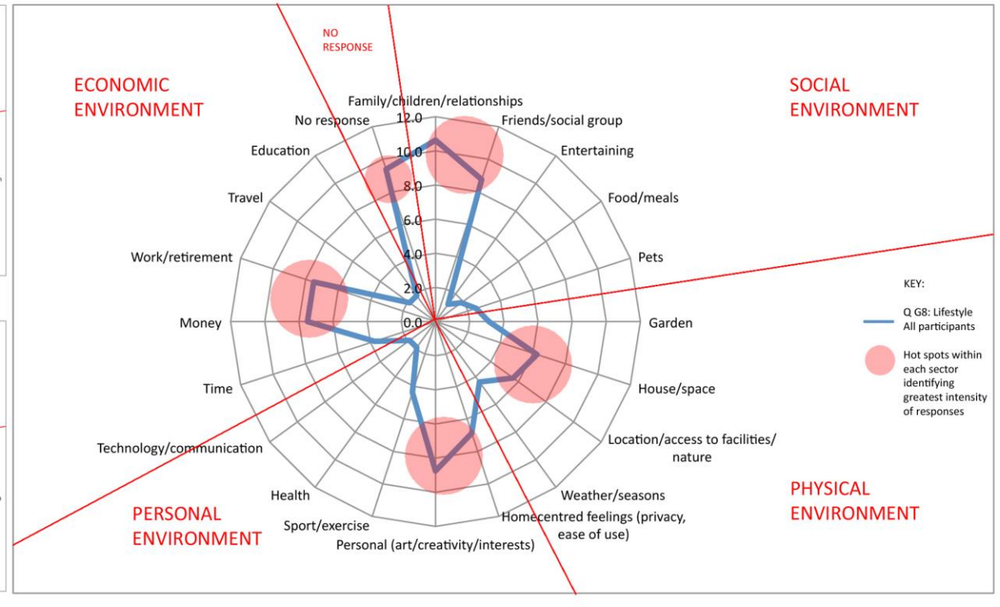


Figure 4.5:
Five capital model filter with 'hotspots'

The report describes the high level of spending,[215] as "keeping up with the Joneses" (ibid.), signifying the power of social and peer pressure, transmitted by the media and personal contacts, thus further linking *lifestyle* with *context* and *having*. Question G8 responses also indicate lifestyle is most closely connected to personal interests identified mainly through social and human capital, which may contribute to the widespread use of lifestyle in relation to consumer goods (Figure 4.6).

Figure 4.6: Lifestyle integral to consumer experience, Perth city centre shopping mall

Although the real estate and home build industries claim customers will gain lifestyle benefits from their physical environment, both the survey and NATSEM findings indicate that the focus of national spending is on the detail aspects of day-to-day living, things that facilitate immediate *feel good* responses. Spending preferences imply that social (relational, collaborative) and personal activities

[215] According to the report around 40 percent of household spending is discretionary, up from 38 percent in 1984.

(individual transformation) are either more accessible or more important than transformation of the environment.

To find out what factors linked lifestyle with transformation, question G9 specifically asked if there were things individuals would like to change *at home* in order to improve their lifestyle? Of the responses, categorized as for G8, many focused on physical changes to the home, to make it more spacious, to make new or modernise and needing a complete renovation (Table 7):

Table 7: Range of responses on lifestyle in first order response

SURVEY RESPONSES RELATING TO LIFESTYLE QUESTION G9 (extract only)		
Category	**G9: First written response:**	**Freq.**
House (space, privacy, design)	De-clutter / unclutter Change layout of house – make more spacious Make it more spacious Finish the house Continue to improve the sustainability/energy efficiency New bathroom floor Layout of the house – very impractical Need dining room separate so there is more space in the lounge Light! (drawback of back-to-back) I would like to change my kitchen – just to make it more to my style and feel Larger house and garden Complete renovation Downsize	14
Garden (outdoor area)	Reduce garden areas Possible garden change Only changes to garden layout Larger entertaining area Outdoor space Move to place with balcony/terrace or garden Outdoor space (terrace/garden) – would require a move Increase size of gardens	8
Note: Categories were created to accommodate all responses for survey question G8 and G9 (participants could enter up to four in order of importance). Some categories were not represented in the first order responses for G9, but dominant in G8, such as money/income.		

However, underlying desired changes were the frustrations of living in a place *not quite right* for current ways of living. Some responses were accompanied with personal reasons such as "bathroom is my least favourite room … because it doesn't have any of my personality in it" and "change kitchen … to make it more my style and feel", which touches on issues of identity. Other responses like "de-clutter" and "make it more spacious" indicate a lack of control over the day-to-day patterns of living, and the accumulation of stuff (refer section 3.5).

Although participants identified many tangible factors about the home contributing to perceptions of well-being, some responses indicated dissatisfaction with other aspects of their way of life, such as health, money and time.[216] Responses such as "be more energetic and motivated", "want to entertain more regularly", "more quality time spent with children" and "get back to basics" are among these, and suggest the built fabric does not accommodate some aspect of home life, and thus an opportunity for design and/or DIY intervention.

Transforming and being transformed

Mapping the lifestyle factors identified through questions G8 and G9 reveals a complex and connected web of personal, social, physical and economic issues present in the participants' daily lives. What is more, this system appears to be both dynamic and extend beyond the fabric of home although tied to it in some way. The responses convey numerous lifestyle aspirations—a range of needs and desires waiting for or in the process of transformation—to individuals, to their relationships with others and to spaces and/or resources.

The responses are synonymous with living in Australia in the current decade, and with a property owning, aspiration, consumption and leisure-focused society. Lifestyle, identified by *things to be changed*, offers a forward-looking perspective, shaping the future both individually and collectively. Instead of seeking the media image of an idealised way of living, participant responses suggest more modest and

[216] Responses touched on both life chance and life choice issues.

realistic ambitions, looking for “alternate lifestyle or social arrangements suitable for achieving quality of life which will be easier to realize” (Milbrath, 1979, p. 45).

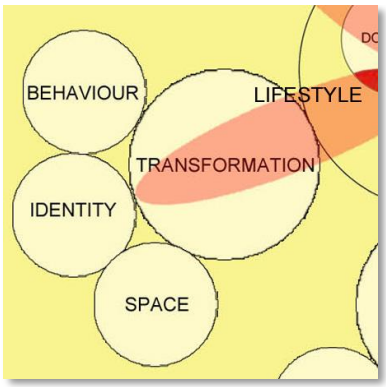
Maslow’s theory for human motivation, based on perpetual needs, also emphasises that every need or “drive is related to the state of satisfaction or dissatisfaction of other drives” (1943, p. 370). Likewise, participant perceptions of lifestyle, when ranked in order of importance, indicates that lifestyle factors and motivations should not be considered in isolation. Survey responses build a picture of lifestyle as a complex interplay of both tangible and intangible issues participants deal with everyday, including – “friends, family and relationships”, “where you live”, “climate”, “cash flow”, “leisure” and “contemplation”. Responses also identify a future way of living that is improved, “more involvement in art”, “larger house and garden”, “downsize and retire” and “increase storage space”.

Most of the participants identified things they would like to improve, which indicates they are, at least conceptually if not practically, active rather than passive inhabitants and consumers, able to “develop lifestyles that will enable us to relate to our environments in a much more fulfilling way” (Marsh, 1990, p. 6). In this context, conscious action fits with lifestyle defined as “a set of behaviours … generally considered to involve a considerable amount of free choice” (Contoyannis & Jones, 2001, p. 2). It also reflects issues of class, status and identity as outlined in literature reviews, suggesting transformation and lifestyle are linked by *feeling* and *being* empowered; to exercise *life choice* within a broader political, cultural and economic environment beyond individual control, *life chance*.

Participants who are homeowners have, at least in terms of legal possession, liberty to decide whether to undertake home improvements to their own property, and further whether to do-it-themselves or become hire renovators, engaging contractors to do the work for them. Essentially, they have *power* and *freedom* to choose how they want to live, and when and how to change the way they live *at home*—the opportunity to transform and be transformed. As such, having the capability to modify home through DIY, enables an individual to demonstrate their

creativity, both on an individual basis and to society. Perhaps then the ability to make change, and the capacity to choose the *way* we live is what makes us truly human (Tunstall, 2008a).

Identity, space and behaviour



Building on survey responses, interviews with participants revealed more detail about the frustration people felt with aspects of their home and how it impacts the way they live. Some could visualise ways to change their patterns of living to create a better way of life; others simply reported that their current situation did not work and were unable to move forward. Questions G8 and G9 highlighted issues with *identity*, *space* and *behaviour*—both literal and conceptual. Perceptions of lifestyle as something influenced by an individual's surroundings and subject to change were more fully expressed in participant conversations about home and reflection on DIY projects (Brown, 2012).

Identity + sense of self

To organise anything on a DIY basis[217] including renovation is to be driven by human motivation and supplied with competence.[218] It also requires a context amenable to the organisation and enactment of the activity, often facilitated by access to human resources (advice, assistance) and suitable man-made environment.[219] To

[217] For example, organising a holiday, featured in both the EC+LS and AECP surveys.
[218] For example, to be able to read/write, be computer literate, capable of use digital and manual tools.
[219] Such as the availability of computers, Internet access, acquisition of tools and materials, availability of transportation and sophistication of service networks.

be able to do/make something entirely *by yourself*[220] in our technology and material culture dominated world, most actions are accomplished as a hybrid of the human and non-human, discussed further in section 4.7. It is in this sense that the DIYer can be considered *actively* becoming a hybrid practitioner, creating an ever-changing collage or blanket of many threads as "a weaver of morphisms" (Latour, 1993, p. 137). This active blend of body, tool and space, presents an opportunity for deeper engagement with natural and man-made environment(s).

According to case study participant Lotus, a novice DIYer and non-designer, simple manual activities allowed mental freedom, with some tasks providing a release from preoccupations of work, the *other* reality. In one interview, Lotus mentioned working through stress with her hands, the repetitive activity allowing her "monkey mind to wander". For nearly all participants, the physical and mental demands of DIY were welcome challenges, although effects of increasing age and decreasing energy and mobility recurred during many conversations. With the majority of participants between forty and sixty years old, many felt they were moving from a time when their bodies and minds were more agile and adaptable, to one where they have more experience but less endurance.

For Lotus, the bodily activity helped overcome the negative connotations connected with aging; "it's like a part of feeling young. If you lose your youth and you can't do things, or your physicality, it's a pretty big hurdle to take". The renewal of home also brought a sense of rejuvenation to her social and personal life. A health scare just before the case study made a huge impact on her sense of independence, yet Lotus returned to health, DIY helped recover trust in her body and her independence. In this sense practicing DIY may contribute to psychological transformation. For Lotus the repainting of walls made *her* feel as renewed, refreshed and cleansed of the past as the rooms she decorated; she would later admire the rooms with satisfaction, long after the work was complete—active then passive—psychological benefit trailing into the future.

[220] This study supports the view that DIY home renovation is in fact a DIW (do-it-with) practice, relying on regenerative life skills and collaboration (Vannini & Taggart, 2013a).

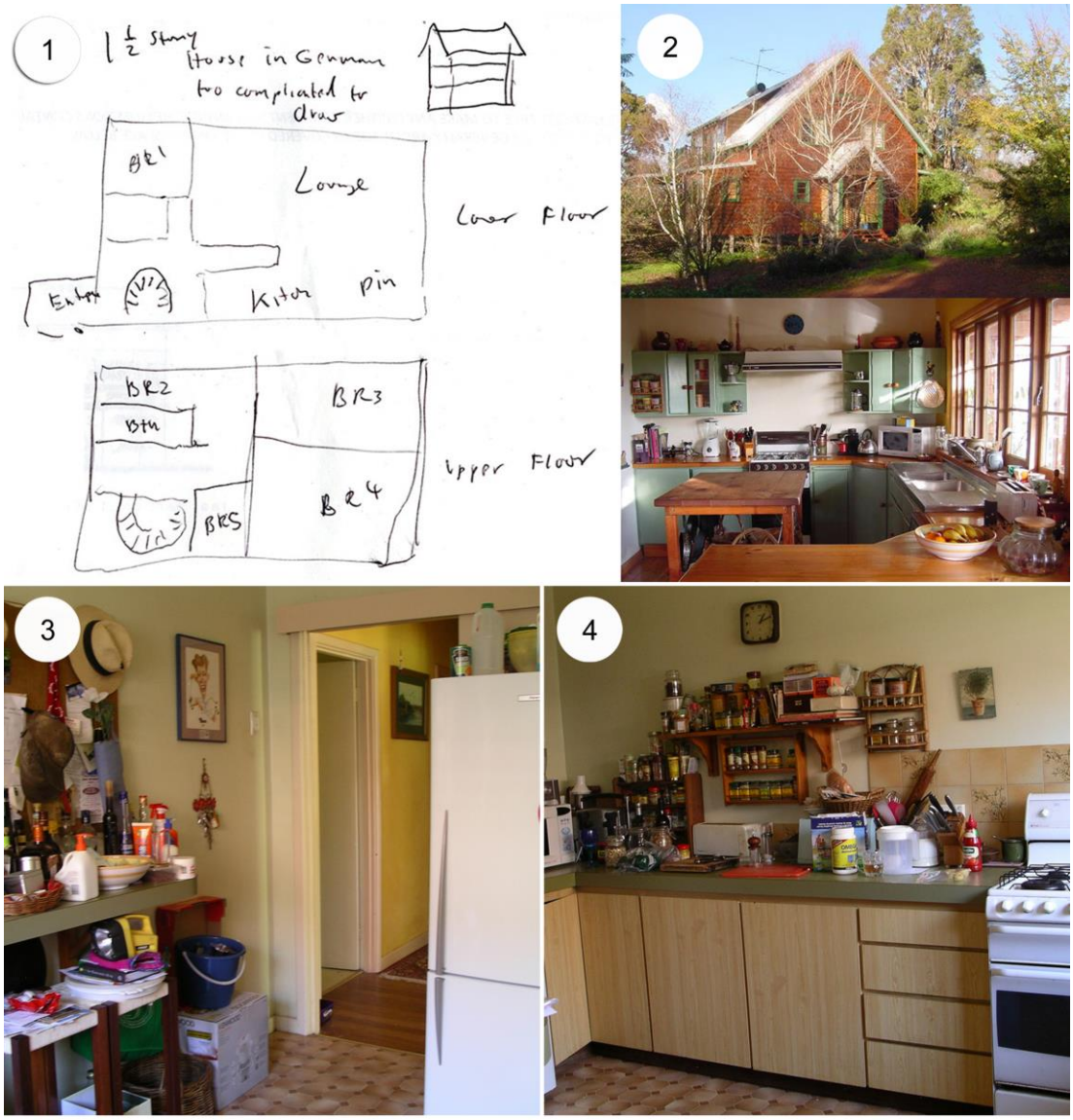
If our bodies are powerful in asserting our independence, then our minds can be more so. Listening to narratives of DIY projects, the ability to *personally* imagine, engineer and make changes to an environment provided participants with a sense of achievement and contributed to self-esteem in a way that projects organised through hire renovating could not. Individual empowerment, regardless of the artefacts, materials, tools and technology involved, works well until something in the system breaks down, and then self-esteem is often negatively impacted. By way of example, another case study participant, architect Fleetwood, felt the involvement of others would result in a loss of quality, and ultimately damage his reputation. The amount of help he would accept, or rather lack of was hugely influenced by trust; he was determined to remain fiercely self-reliant, believing the standard of workmanship would reflect on his design and build capabilities. Instead he remained overwhelmed with the volume of work to be done alone.

Interviews with couple Scooter and Domino[221] revealed another struggle, a relationship with home caught between past memories, present struggles and future hopes. They warmly described how they built their dream home in the country, but later moved back into the city for family reasons, a move that shattered Domino's sense of self and harmony with home. Passionately unhappy in the current house, her dreams of domestic contentment were in pieces. Scooter had been an *owner builder* completing the country house in his forties with some contractor input, but a stroke stopped him (them) doing any renovation work and his wife was growing impatient with the "compromise home" (Figure 4.7).

Another participant, Pandora,[222] a career woman in her forties, spoke of age-related limitations with regard to her elderly father, Homespun,[223] always an enthusiastic self-builder, who insisted on helping her do a bathroom renovation to her first home. Homespun was determined to work at same pace he always had, unaware or not accepting his body was too frail to do familiar DIY tasks. Ultimately other

[221] No design skills, some DIY experience.
[222] No design skills, some DIY experience, participant assisted her father with decorating projects as an adolescent.
[223] No design background, substantial DIY background.

people finished the bathroom when work commitments took Pandora away from the area, her father not able to complete it alone.



1. Scooter's childhood home in Germany - survey Q H2. 2. Domino + Scooter's previous home - a country house Scooter realised (after drawing the H2 reponse) was subconsciously modelled on his childhood home. 3 and 4. The couple's current suburban home - cramped, cluttered, old - a complete contrast to the previous expansive new house in the country.

Figure 4.7: Scooter and Domino's current and previous homes

Participant Signal also resisted identifying with age, although her husband Seaspray had realised their home was becoming "too much hard work to maintain".

Although Signal was close to retirement herself, she remarked on the way her in-laws' home reflected their advancing years, describing a place that was run-down and neglected, musty and in poor repair. Signal was worried their house would follow suit, and in doing so reflect its age back on the inhabitants. She described her dream of maintenance free, modern, up-to-the minute living; notably wanting a maintenance-free garden as a run-down garden symbolized—to her—a run-down life, loosing touch with youth and with contemporary tastes, and being out of date (Bonner, 2008).

In a war waged on the aging home, although Signal was feeling defeated, for another participant Delmar twenty years her junior and single mother of two, the march of time provided a provocation to launch into attack. Delmar felt strong and independent using tools as she renovated a two-hundred-year-old building in Germany; she was a woman empowered by the physicality of manual work and driven, needing a place of comfort and security for her young family.

Among the male participants, Paperbark, Tangent and Emporio, together with case study participants Jasper and Fleetwood, all competent DIYers, felt they could no longer labour all day without multiple breaks, fatigue set in too early. For many the body-mind hybrid had become unbalanced, the mind still willing, the body less strong; here, participants have identified with the physicality of the activity, either as a way of feeling empowered and independent, or as a way of revealing their limitations. Over time, the widening gap between imagination and action became more significant as participants took on the physical journey from idea to reality. At this stage of realisation some other participants nearing retirement or retired became hire-renovators.[224]

[224] A number identified DIY with the early years of their marriage and/or their first experience as a home owner, full of energy and optimism and lacking funds to hire contractors. Several participants who now exclusively hired others were interviewed but not included in the thesis.

Space + spaciousness

The participant cohort has already identified a wide range of issues they associate with their lifestyle at home, and the quality or quantity of space were among the most frequently made comments about the house itself.[225] Jasper, for example, felt that the layout of his house required modification, focusing on the possible uses and perception of *spaciousness* rather than ease of movement (Figure 4.8). Of the issues Jasper identified, "finances, weather, house layout [and] available time", it is the physical aspect of home life that is the most accessible for him to manipulate when asked what he would like to change.[226]

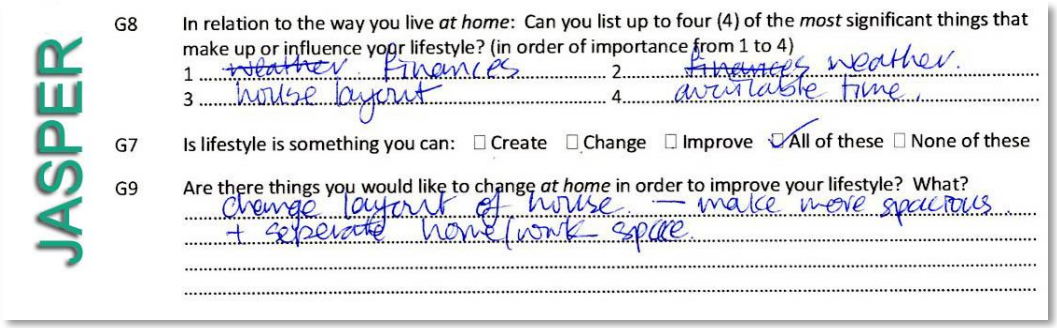
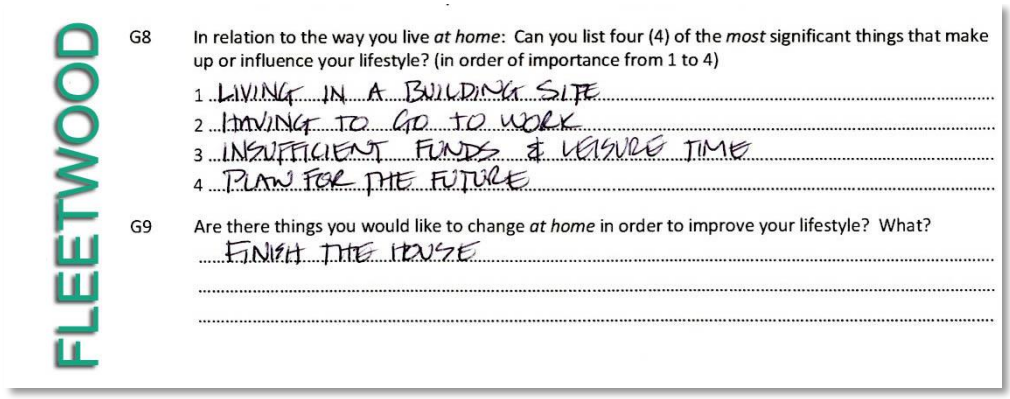


Figure 4.8: Jasper's response to survey questions on lifestyle

Fleetwood, another designer also selected the physical aspect of home life as the thing he would most like to change, and given the embedded nature of the other issues,[227] the thing most feasible for him to change (Figure 4.9). Fleetwood, like Jasper, indicated that time and finance are critical influences on his lifestyle, however, for him living in a space that is incomplete, disrupted, disruptive, dirty and messy is more difficult to control due to the scale of the project.

[225] Issues relating to spaciousness and lack of (clutter, disruption) are discussed in section 4.3 and 4.4.
[226] Indicating that modification of home, making physical change, is an accessible way to manifest or express life choice.
[227] Acknowledging that some things people would like to change are also embedded in wider socio-economic and cultural structures, such as those that comprise life chance.



FLEETWOOD

G8 In relation to the way you live *at home*: Can you list four (4) of the *most* significant things that make up or influence your lifestyle? (in order of importance from 1 to 4)

1 LIVING IN A BUILDING SITE
2 HAVING TO GO TO WORK
3 INSUFFICIENT FUNDS & LEISURE TIME
4 PLAN FOR THE FUTURE

G9 Are there things you would like to change *at home* in order to improve your lifestyle? What?

FINISH THE HOUSE

Figure 4.9: Fleetwood's response to survey questions on lifestyle

Fleetwood's main objective was to "finish the house", the key to improving his current way of life. Although for Jasper the DIY projects were sporadically intrusive and dominating space at home, for Fleetwood the house renovation had become overwhelming, restricting his ability to "plan for the future". Fleetwood identified closely with the project, but he differentiated between the collection of spaces he lived in and a place that *feels* like home:

QUOTE PARTICIPANT CONVERSATIONS

Fleetwood: This still doesn't feel like home. It is a series of nice spaces that work really well but it's not-
Pollywaffle: So it's a project? It's been a project for you?
Fleetwood: Yes, but it is part of me because it represents who I am, and it-
Jasper: [For us] in the end [the previous renovation] was just about the money. It was nice, there was a sense of satisfaction that somebody had bought a house that we had done ourselves, but no sense of attachment.
Fleetwood: I feel like the last five years of my life have just gone ... and that's why I am talking about there's no - this has been a pain in my arse to tell you the truth ... it's my fault because of the person I am.

Fleetwood's work as an architect revolved around the creation of spaces other people will live in, bespoke homes designed with functional and circulation areas specifically tailored to their needs, desires and dreams. In reality, spaces are designed in response to discussions in meetings, the exchange of ideas and images and tempered by many constraints, not least the budget and timescale. A client's future lifestyle may quite literally be in the hands of the architect and builder, and

indeed participants who felt a loss of control through outsourcing design had valid concerns about *whose* space would come into being.

Fleetwood admitted his training had been more than simply beneficial to his DIY project, and acknowledged that many houses in older suburbs, built "thirty years ago … just not the way we want to live now and should be changed", needed remodeling. However, in spite of this, he dismissed taking on renovation work in the office because it often came with too many unpredictable variables,[228] issues he had internalised as a client *and* owner-builder. Using words such as composition, harmony, and holistic Fleetwood was adamant his professional focus was on new-build, wanting a "clean slate" to work with, in sharp contrast to his disrupted home life in a disrupted space. At home, his life was mirroring the messy day-to-day lives of homeowners who *require* design assistance to achieve a sense of harmony through the rationalisation and modernisation of older style homes. Fleetwood, like other architects in the study, preferred applying design skills to the perfect imaginary of dream spaces rather than the outdated, unsuitable yet real spaces of some participant homes.

Behaviour

In a prototype survey question, Diva, Emporio and Jasper all felt lifestyle was something they could *create, change and improve*. Although the case study data supported this, it was unclear *how* participants anticipated *creating* lifestyle per se, other than building a new house, a clean slate.[229] Changing the form and space of home proved more accessible than improving other things that made up or influenced participant lifestyles, such as patterns of behaviour[230] involving other people, or embedded in other spheres (refer section 3.3). Extending into the

[228] For example, unplanned issues requiring added resource input, not only design time, but also build time and material cost.

[229] Even then, as discussed in the context of Fleetwood's work, the imprint of the designer's hand shapes the dreams of others, and as the new owner makes home they modify spaces with furniture to suit their preferences, thus relocating and changing a lifestyle brought with them from a previous home, and under the influence of designer input.

[230] Behaviour here interpreted as an action that changes the relationship of individuals with their environment (Suedfeld & Russell, 1976-1977), and refers back to the lifestyle paradigm where behaviour and opportunity are implicated within the dispositions to act, refer section 3.2.

cultural realm, the harder it becomes to manage or effect individual change, as aspirations, goals and values are deeply embedded with those of the wider community (Schein, 2004).

Decisions such as whether to undertake home improvement on a DIY basis move changing or improving lifestyle into the realm of possibility, especially for homeowners who have creativity, motivation, skills (or access to skilled assistance) and resources available to commit to a project, such as the three participants involved in the case study.

Lotus, Fleetwood and Jasper are all people creating and curating in their day-to-day lives, shaping spaces then selecting and organising their belongings for display. Each was found mapping out projects and scheduling resources around opportunities to do something useful, actively reshaping their homes and reorganising the physical texture of their surroundings. Even as professional designers, Fleetwood and Jasper juggle with organisational priorities outside of the work environment, the separation between client and designer no longer visible. At home, the boundaries of roles are blurred, behaving at times like designers, at others like builders, but mostly as clients. According to Clarke roles at work are less complex than at home, where people use:

> Material culture as a means of ordering a multitude of relationships to all the people they know, their family, friends, possible visitors to their house, and to all the multiple aspects of themselves that jostle for a place in these museums and galleries that are people's living spaces in every sense of the word *living*. (2011, p. 98, emphasis in original)

Rearranging furniture, recovering upholstery, re-decorating, refreshing, renewing, and remaking are all patterns of behaviour that express the human drive for continual change. Lotus redecorated and remodeled the garden in renegotiating

her relationship with the house and finding her *self-place* without a husband.[231] Fleetwood was renegotiating his expectations, the house having witnessed his carefree life of renting, then troubled life with a partner, then traumatic period of soul-searching when they parted. For Jasper the journey triggered the sale of his house a short time after the case study drew to a close. Having inherited then rationalised a peculiar layout,[232] redesigned and built a new garden, and improved where possible the tired appearance of the older house, it was time to move on and repeat a pattern of home shaping and making behaviour.[233]

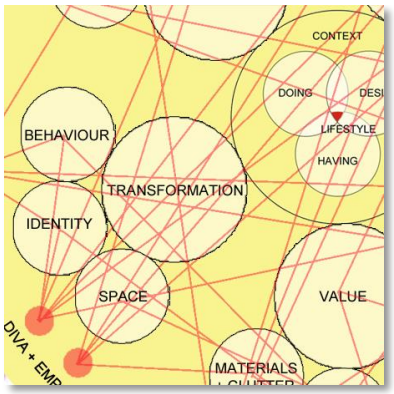
During the case study, just as the physical environment was undergoing change, each participant was also responding to the challenges presented, developing a sense of purpose centred on *the project.* Fleetwood's project helped rebuild his social life and sense of control over the future; both he and the house were found to be sites of reconstruction. Having spent every spare moment on the house he struggled to regain balance in his home life, having occupied a series of incomplete spaces, his life was a series of fragmented activities. Jasper's schedule and scope of tasks was more manageable, resulting in a more cohesive pattern of behaviour. An ongoing series of projects took him from one challenge to the next as time allowed, working his way through an unfolding relationship with the built configuration, and with others.[234] Lotus' project responded to the rhythms of her life rebuilt as a new symphony, a new set of patterns without her husband, finding a place of serenity and meaning through *doing*, through transforming *their* home into *her* home.

Home renovation unfolded through participant engagement with a multitude of practices: consumption, designing and building, personalising and inhabiting (home making) and social, also identifiable as *actions* in the lifestyle paradigm and through

[231] Lotus' husband died before the study commenced.
[232] The previous owners of his home had subdivided rooms and closed in the veranda, resulting in a labyrinth of small rooms each with at least two doorways.
[233] When there was no more he could do without the significant cost commitment of involving others (building contractors, planners, engineers), such as adding on a two storey extension, he felt the house still had a negative impact on their lifestyle; the layout continued to resisted the way they had enjoyed living before and wanted to live again.
[234] Jasper's journey of discovery also related to his skill development having become friends with a builder, Paperbark, regularly chatting about techniques, tools and materials.

the study threads. If the search for a better life equates to the active creation of conditions supporting the ascent to self-actualization, then lifestyle might comprise the set of practices that combine human ingenuity, creativity, materials, processes and tools in the quest for improvement. Just as change-making behaviour shapes or remodels *everyday* lifestyle, the pursuit of the *dream* lifestyle shapes everyday behaviour, experience and identity as the space for living is changed.

Connecting lifestyle with the dream



The concept of lifestyle has been explored from several directions; as portrayed in the media as something people can create; as the dream of an ideal or better way of living, as the driver behind practices centred on change, and as a home under continual transformation, realised through self-navigated DIY and design processes.

Participants indicated aspects of home life they would like to improve, most searching for harmony among the discordant parts of their lives; competing priorities, disrupted rituals, fragmented time. Some quite literally changed the house in the belief it would ease or dispel existing dissonance, but findings revealed the relationship between homeowners, their things, spaces and selves was far more complex.

Exploring the factors impacting on life in the home (refer Table 7), a tangled web of issues emerged linking anticipated and actual patterns of behaviour. Lifestyle materialised as part goal and part process, an individual blend of life choice and life chance, some aspects influencing the way we live and others our sense of well-

being. Participant interpretations of lifestyle highlighted multiple touch points, discussed in chapter 5, connecting lifestyle with social, cultural, economic, manufactured and human/political capitals, and the functional, physical, social and aesthetic environment. As such, this wide range of issues assists in broadening the discussion about scope and impact of design and influence of change-making behaviour.

4.3 Context

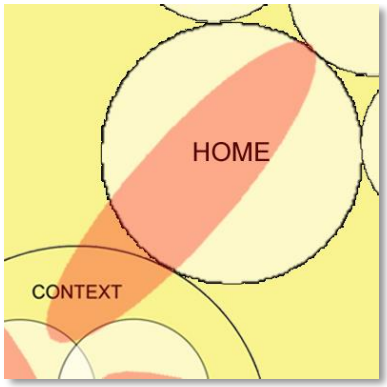
Dominating the construction or transformation of lifestyle are the physical domains within which the processes and practices leading to change take place, and the socio-cultural spaces where a person (or group), and their behaviour, is seen to change. The *ideal* home emerged through analysis of media samples identifying the external influences on domestic renovators. Thereafter the *real* home was considered through the experience of participants, initially as the site of modification. The domestic world of participants quickly expanded beyond the real to imagined places, and from material to emotional, past to future, local to global, internal to external, social to personal.

Although a critical frame for the other threads, the focus of *context* was limited to the influence of media and popular culture on home and lifestyle improvement, a discourse embracing notions such as the *ideal home* and the *perfect life*. This section therefore explores the thread *context* through participant data to determine:

> (i) What choices do people make about their immediate surroundings, in terms of location, typology, and suitability for the way they live—or want to live?
> (ii) How do people interpret the notion of an *ideal* home, and how does this differ from their *real* home?

(iii) What is the role of the media in creating a notion of an *ideal* home and *perfect* life, and how does this influence or motivate the participants to make improvements to their homes?

Home



Global home

The study is generally situated in Australia, however, participants originated from or were located in a variety of locations, and the issues contributing to context were as diverse and wide ranging as the lives and histories of the people in any migrant country. The survey revealed just under half of the participants have called at least two countries home, and around a quarter of the participants now lived in a different country from their childhood. The remaining participants stayed in their country of birth and childhood, the majority in Australia (26 participants) and the UK (11 participants).

As well as those who relocated, a number of participants lived and worked or studied in other countries, demonstrating considerable social mobility amongst the cohort. During interviews, many reported familiarity with two or more cultural environments, places they simultaneously identified with as home. One couple, for example, who were living in Hong Kong (HK) as English expatriates report distinct differences in renovation practices between the HK or *Chinese way*—where very few homeowners practice DIY, and the *English way*—where DIY is very popular.[235]

[235] Popsicle and Abbot, both designers, observed differences in the role of the designer between renovation work in HK and in the UK. In HK, renovation work is usually completed entirely by

Popsicle and Abbot felt that established patterns of business within each culture were the reason for this disparity. In HK and China labour is relatively cheap and contractors monopolise construction work, even for minor home improvements. Further, space in Hong Kong is at a premium, so without sheds to store tools and materials, expatriates are unable to continue DIY practices they may have enjoyed in their home country.

The survey responses thus indicated how the participants fit into the economic, political, cultural and social complexity of contemporary Australia, and beyond into the global culture of leisure which includes literally and metaphorically *making home* (Najman & Western, 2000) (section 3.3). Mostly, however, the survey did not reveal major geographic differences in perceptions of lifestyle or of home life, and in many respects, the media images of ideal home are similar regardless of location.[236]

Local home

The majority of participants (87.5%) lived in suburbs and cities, and most have freestanding houses with land (82.5%), the Great Australian Dream. One participant lived in a house designed and built specifically to their requirements, and, by contrast, three participants were renting and unable even to hang a picture on the wall of their own volition.[237]

Nearly all (90%) bought their homes in private sales controlled by the real estate industry, and moving into a house built for or by another person, which either appealed in contrast to their previous residence or in similarity. Importantly, these homeowners were at liberty to make decisions on whether to modify their way of living to suit the house, or to modify the house to accommodate the way they have been living or want to live in future (Figure 4.10). When compared to the AECP

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contractors on a 'design-build' basis, with most interior design decisions made by the contractor, and there is very little contact with the client over design decisions.

[236] For example in content, style, subject matter and message conveyed.

[237] Tenants in the UK and Australia are restricted by short tenancy periods (often 6-12 months), and are not permitted to alter the fabric of a building (section 3.3).

precedent study, conducted fifteen years earlier at a time when the Australian government was beginning to encourage greater home ownership, there is a similar distribution of responses.[238]

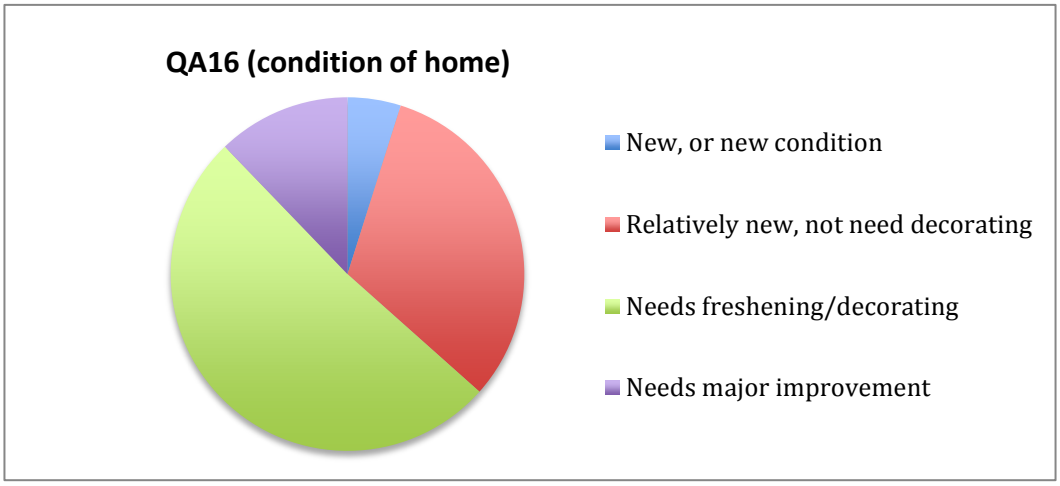


Figure 4.10: Question A16 – current condition of home

The majority of participants (80%) rated the suburb/location as the most important factor in choosing the property, with the size and appearance important for the remaining 20%. Although these can be visible signifiers of taste, choice and socio-economic position, according to most participants when interviewed, these decisions were primarily made for practical reasons, such as being close to family or work, familiar with the area, and close to amenities. For some, however, the prestige of particular suburbs emerged as a key factor in their choice in later interviews, some influenced by the marketing hype of real estate agencies offering the opportunity to buy into an *ideal* lifestyle.

In order of priority, the subsequent factors in residential choice were more diverse (Figure 4.11). The future potential for change through renovation or site redevelopment featured most strongly in the second choice responses (30.2%), with well over half (63.4%) of all participants anticipating home improvement in the near future (Figure 4.12). More females than males were represented in this last

[238] The majority are homeowners (71.3%), many live in an inner city or suburban area (68.1%), and most live in a freestanding house (87%).

group (58%) reflecting current trends in home décor marketing campaigns and the rise of female enthusiasts in the DIY arena (Shove, 2007).

A number of participants were attracted to their current home by the aesthetics or appearance of interior/exterior features (27.9%) and house size (23%). For other important factor(s) that influenced their selection, nine participants (36%) noted proximity to facilities or amenity, thus emphasis again on location, six (28%) chose the typology of house and quality or design, and four (16%) wanted to be close to relations.

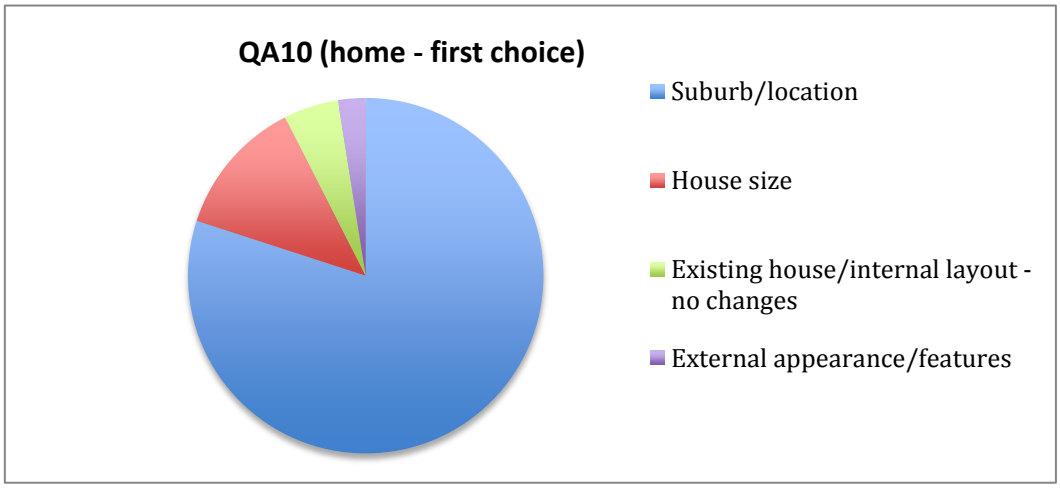


Figure 4.11: Question A10 – main reason for choosing house (first choice)

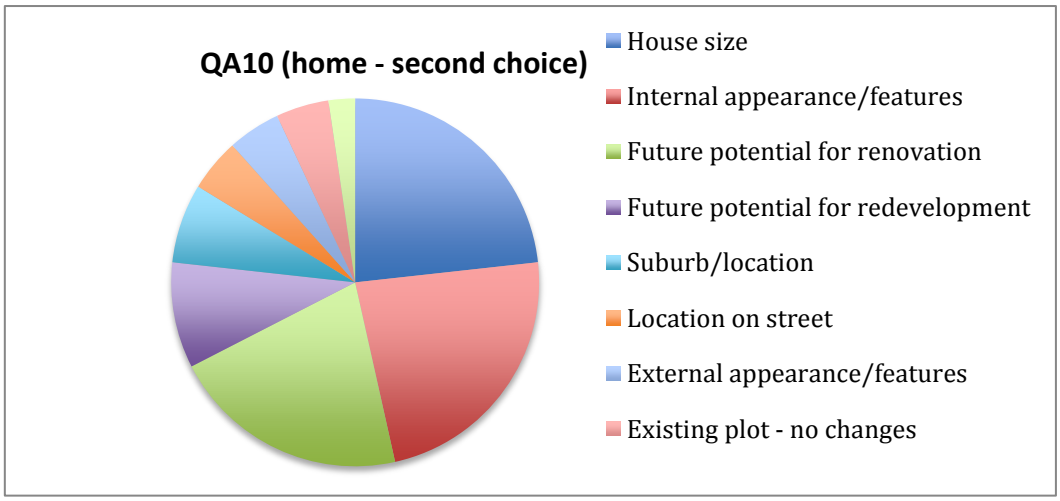


Figure 4.12: Question A10 – main reason for choosing house (second choice)

Aware that individuals select particular locations for social, cultural, economic or personal reasons; the real estate industry has firmly embraced both the practical and emotional responses people have to choosing where and how to live, promoting popular site(s), typology, size and configuration of accommodation (section 3.2).

The contemporary home

The average house for the cohort was seen to provide generous areas (over 150-199 square metres) of internal space with most (85%) having three or more bedrooms and many (72.5%) with two or more bathrooms. The survey findings illustrate a number of typical traits of contemporary homes,[239] the room configurations and luxury features[240] now commonplace expectations, fuelled partly by the media and real estate industry and fed by commercial providers of home entertainment systems (Roney, 2007).

In terms of the layout, the majority of participant homes (90%) were open plan; a trend introduced with post-war housing design and remains desirable today. In property built prior to 1960, enlarging/combining rooms a commonplace feature of subsequent *modernisation* (Garvey, 2003). However, renovating to create an open plan layout has implications for both changing the way people live and interact influenced by varying degrees of privacy, and for maintenance with subsequent decorating needing to be done on a more comprehensive basis as larger areas are visible.

The age and construction of the property contributes significantly to the likelihood and feasibility of making improvements, and also impacts on the process of renewal or adaptation to rooms or entire layouts, as will be seen with the case study projects. Although marketing by the home improvement industry urges homeowners to *add value* to homes through renovation, the original choice of

[239] For example, the inclusion of a home theatre, several en-suite bathrooms, and various areas for relaxation.
[240] Such as seamless house-garden connection, parent retreats, gourmet kitchens, spa baths, frameless showers and double garages.

house and location, and length of time in residence, can have serious ramifications.[241]

Although choosing and changing a home are empowering actions, territorial home-making behaviour engages people with systems beyond their control (Atkinson, 2006). In accepting contemporary notions of *the dream home* and succumbing to popular aspirations, society collectively consumes mass-produced products, materials and ideas. Simultaneously, media and popular culture exploit the society of consumers, readily accessible, drawing people further into a culture of consumption (Droge, Calantone, Agrawal, & Mackoy, 1993).

Media and designer homes

In order to gauge the influence of media on perceptions of home, including references to *designer* and *well-designed* homes, participants were asked to identify their favourite home-related television programmes and magazines. Of the programmes watched most regularly, participants favoured GD, an award winning British TV series featuring bespoke architecturally styled dream homes. The popularity of this choice suggesting a significant portion of the cohort had an interest in both *dream* home design projects and narratives of self-build adventures (Figure 4.13).

Each GD episode follows the build of a new house, often unusual and elaborate projects with clients taking on various roles, often a DIY approach. The presenter, Kevin McCloud[242], frequently stressing the risks of not employing an experienced architect, and in doing so emphasises the contribution of professional expertise in seeking a *well-designed* outcome: "I've seen plenty of projects not designed by architects and they all share one thing: a horrible clumsiness" (2006, p. 44).

[241] Such as the likelihood of asbestos in building, presenting a significant health risk for renovators. Perth, WA has been called 'the asbestos capital of the world', as the material is present in almost every house built prior to 1987 (Bannister & Lingdren, 2010).
[242] A lighting and theatre designer who promotes the benefits of professional design services through the programme, even though some projects demonstrate a design-it-yourself approach.

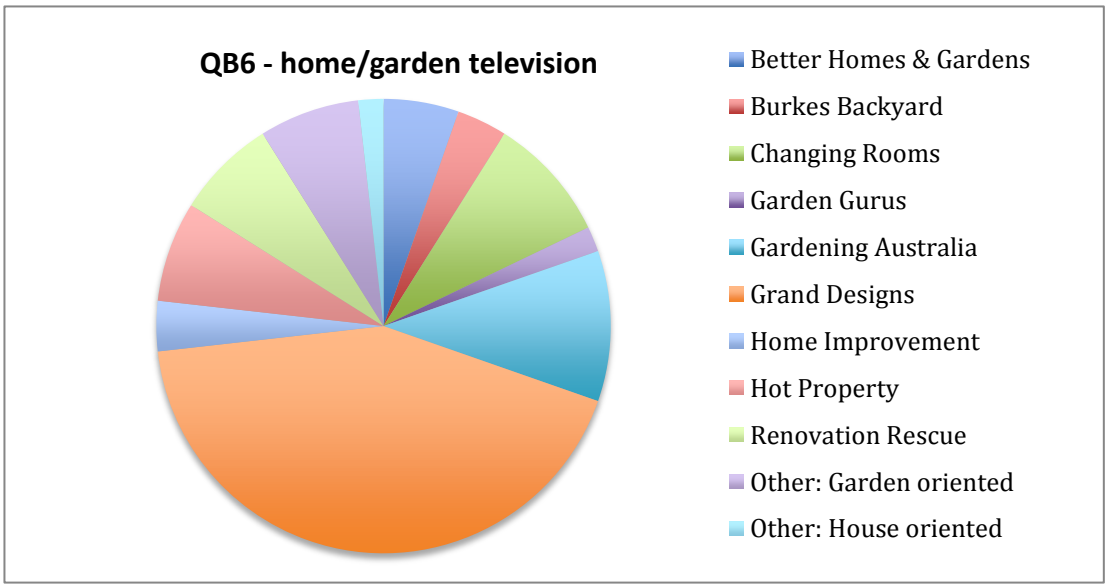


Figure 4.13: Favourite home/garden television programmes

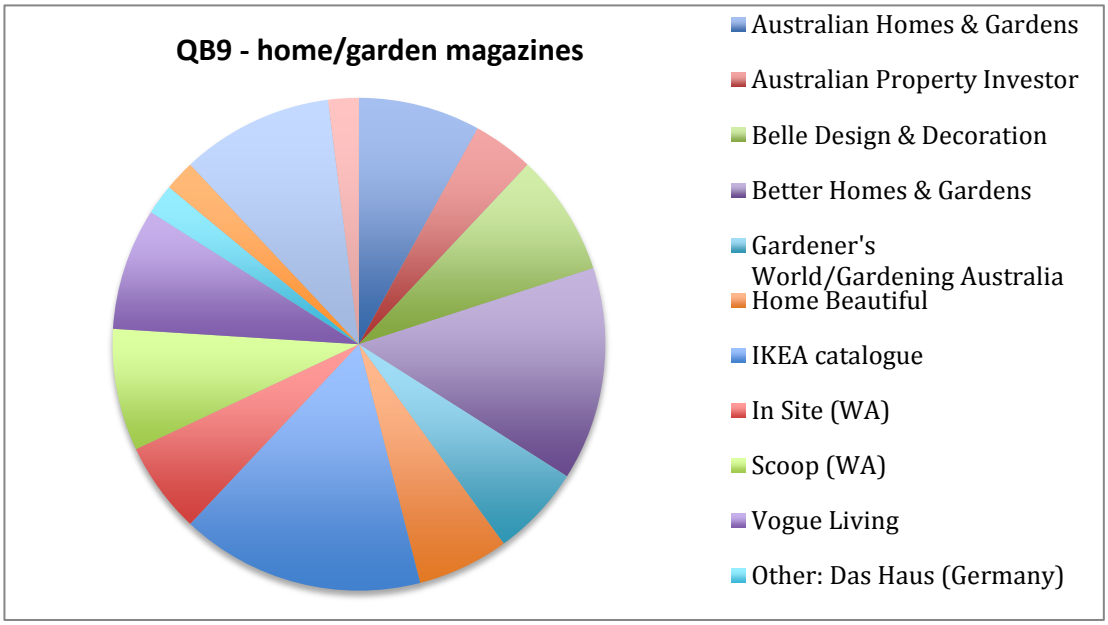


Figure 4.14: Favourite home/garden magazines/publications

Reasons given for watching selected programmes included entertainment—the DIY dramas of homeowners caught on camera, and inspiration, given the focus is equally on challenging projects and design issues. Fleetwood, for example, comments it is the "only programme on television that actually reports on architecture". The nation-wide popularity of GD foregrounds audience an interest in good design, both technical and aesthetic, however, is not matched by a willingness to engage professional designers for home improvement projects.

Although the design thread explores this in more detail, the contrast between the projects documented in GD and the DIY exploits of participants is pronounced, partly due to the scale of projects but also the resources available. Regardless of the benefits of architectural services espoused by McCloud, participants believed they either would not be able to afford an architect, or justify the cost for a renovation.[243]

Also popular with participants were a number of free-to-air gardening and renovation shows, watched in the most part for entertainment (40.38%) but also for ideas (32.69%). Additionally, just under half the participants bought magazines to get ideas for their own projects (45%); *Better Homes & Gardens* ranked along the *IKEA* catalogue as ones most viewed. Many home and garden magazines from participant selections were found to combine seductive product advertising, appealing professionally composed images and enticingly easy instructions for DIY projects; evidently targeting homeowners considering home improvement more directly than television programmes that are broadcast to a wider audience (Figure 4.14).

Ideal vs real home

Dialogue surrounding the notions of an *ideal home* and a *perfect lifestyle* was found to be pervasive in the media (section 3.3), however, from this study and other precedent survey findings there is an apparent disconnect between the use of these terms in the public arena and individual applications. The national AECP study asked 2,756 respondents key questions about home-based leisure activities, media influence and taste (Bennett et al., 1999). Although investigating cultural perceptions, the AECP survey asked respondents to pick three words from the twelve listed that were *most* important or closest words describing an ideal home, and then three words that were *least* important.

[243] That architectural service is prohibitively expensive was found to be a common belief, regardless whether participants had any idea how much architectural intervention may cost.

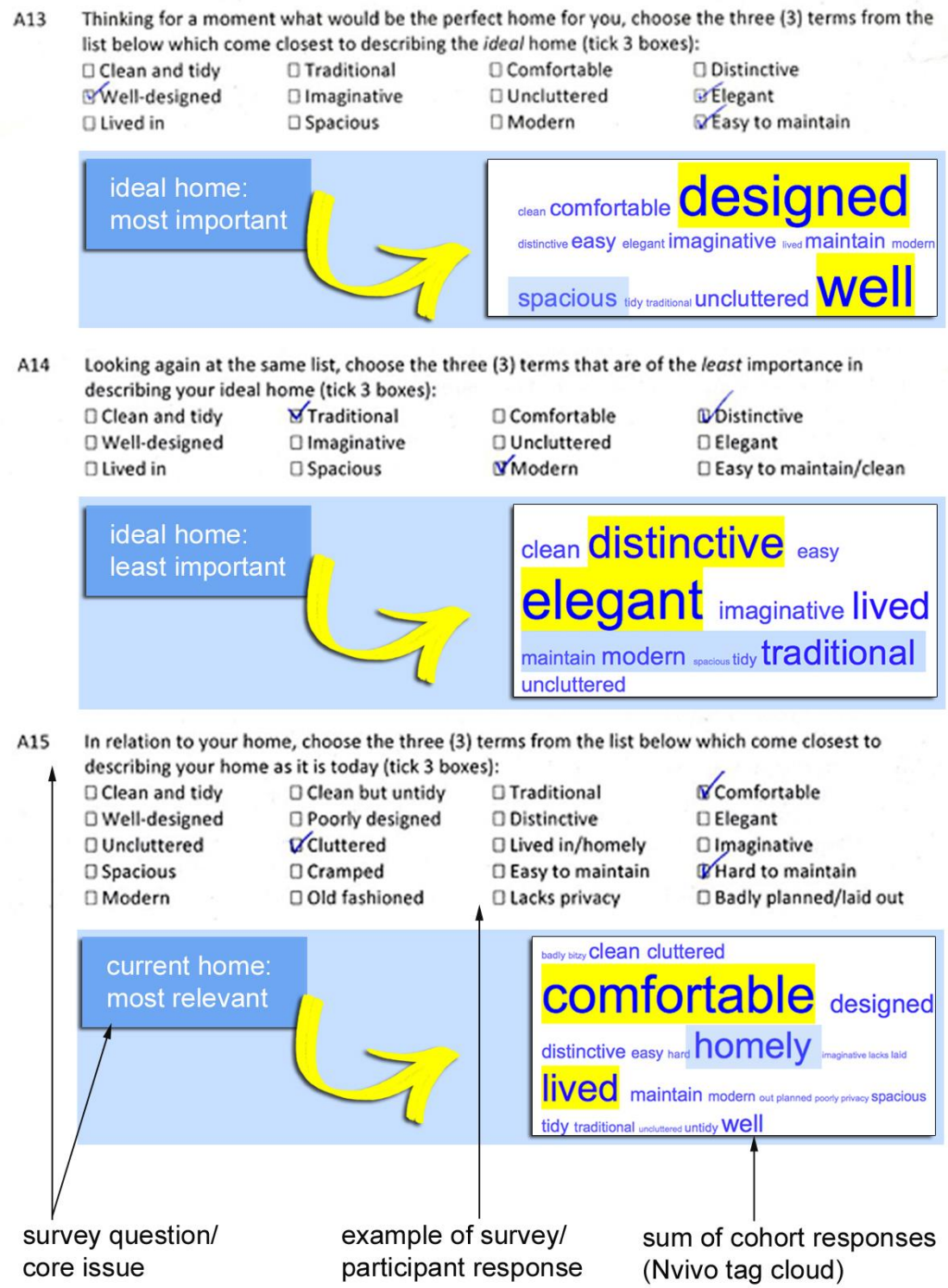


Figure 4.15: Survey extract – questions on current and ideal home

Participants in this study were asked the same two questions about their *ideal* home in the EC+LS, plus the three words that best described their *current* home—representing the participant's reality, the *real* environment in which they live

(Figure 4.15). The word *ideal*, however, does not necessarily infer that the alternative is *unreal*, but indicates an imagined best-case scenario, whether this is founded in *unreal* or fictional media constructs or *real* previous experience(s). Comparison of the two surveys reveals similar preferences emerging in the responses to questions on the ideal home (Table 8):

Table 8: Comparisons of study and precedent surveys on current and ideal home

Responses by percentage (and order) per survey:* *Question topic/options:*		AECP (1994-95) precedent	EC+LS (2009-10)
A13: Ideal home – most important:	Comfortable	21.84 (1)	15.00 (2)
	Easy to maintain	17.24 (2)	14.16 (3)
	Well-designed	12.44 (3)	28.33 (1)
	Clean & tidy	17.14 (4)	5.00 (7)
	Spacious	9.76 (5)	10.00 (4)
	Lived in	5.57 (6)	1.67 (12)
A14: Ideal home – least important:	Elegant	22.19 (1)	15.83 (1)
	Distinctive	19.75 (2)	15.83 (1)
	Modern	15.39 (3)	12.49 (2)
	Traditional	12.97 (4)	15.83 (1)
	Imaginative	12.61 (5)	7.49 (3)
	Lived in	5.89 (6)	12.49 (2)
A15: Current home – closest description: (not asked in AECP)	Comfortable		20.00 (1)
	Lived in/homely		19.17 (2)
	Spacious		10.83 (3)
	Clean & tidy		6.67 (4)
	Cluttered		5.83 (5)
	Well-designed		5.83 (5)

*Percentage calculated from three selections per question, and number in brackets obtained through hierarchy in frequency.

The *least* important selections were more closely matched between the AECP and EC+LS surveys, than the *most* important, especially clean & tidy and lived in. These words appear slightly higher in priority for the AECP study, possibly reflecting the wider demographic range of the respondents, and variation in residential status.

The typical *dream home* rhetoric of real estate marketing, retail advertising and media appears to have had little impact on the participants of both studies, with

elegant, distinctive, modern and traditional[244] being the least important features of an ideal home. Both modern and traditional rated as least important by a similar percentage, suggesting either a preference for modern and thus eschew traditional style, or visa versa. The qualities participants consider the most important of an ideal home appear counter to the media rhetoric, with most identifying practical considerations rather than lofty aspirations—comfortable, easy to maintain, well-designed and spacious. Domestic *space* has always been a precious commodity, however, increasing land values, build costs, consumer spending patterns and other demands on income have pushed up demand for more cost effective housing, resulting in higher residential densities, smaller houses, and less available storage (Cwerner & Metcalfe, 2003; Hopkins, 2007).

Furthermore, many study participants consider they already have comfortable, spacious and lived in/homely homes, suggesting a level of domestic contentment for at least half of them, regardless of persistent messages feeding the consumption culture, encouraging people to continually reassess their needs and wants (Droge et al., 1993). Comfort was included for comparison with the AECP survey; however, the high frequency of comfort as one of the *most* important qualities in both an ideal home *and* the current home, indicated the need for clarification of meaning in this context. Architecture based texts have wide ranging interpretations, some suggest that building comfort is "a summary of dynamic conditions" (Davis, 1998), while other commentators on design relate to qualities traditionally suited to human activity and appealing to human nature; commodity, comfort, spaciousness and light (McCloud, 2006).

A third of the participants selected well-designed as an important aspect of an ideal home, and yet did not necessarily associate this with a distinctive or elegant property or modern style, terms used by the popular media when referencing *designer homes.* The choice of words indicated differentiation between (professional) design input and the application of the term *designer* to signify stylish

[244] Terms found to be prevalent in participant resource material, especially real estate brochures, flyers and street signage in participant localities.

elements or aesthetics. Based on the previous, a building that is designed well is likely to offer comfort to its inhabitants. Notably, while many felt well-designed something they desire in an *ideal* home, in reality either no-one valued it enough to engage a design professional, or were able to financially justify outsourcing design work.

Houses for living (without seeming 'lived in')

Over a half of participants felt their current homes had a lived in/homely feel, yet this was selected one of the *least* important aspects of an ideal home, indicating that being lived in or appearing occupied/full of personal belongings, is neither indicative of comfort, nor how people would *ideally* prefer their homes to be. As previously observed, a common feature of the media images in participants' *favourite* magazines, their sources of inspiration, is also the absence of human habitation, the lack of life and clutter (section 3.3).

The need to contain the signs of daily life has been voiced by participants in other aspects of the study, reinforcing the desire for a home offering comfort to the people who live there and yet somehow render the inhabitants invisible. Home as a place meeting both ideal and real expectations appears to exist in a liminal zone somewhere between the messy signs of life, lived-in and comfortable, and spaciousness, lack of clutter, an absence of the things gathered during day-to-day habitation and personalization. For participants who are architects, this issue surfaced on many occasions as they recounted many clients who described their vision for a new house devoid of clutter. Clients would often present magazine images as examples of the houses they imagined living in, full of light and *empty* space, a life *without* the things designed to facilitate living.[245]

Although survey responses to qualities of an *ideal* home were dominated by comfort, easy to maintain and well-designed, most participants in interviews mentioned their more encompassing desire for space and light around them.

[245] Such as clothing, cleaning equipment, stationary, rubbish disposal, electrical extension leads, laundry equipment (washing lines/ironing boards, baskets), gardening equipment and clothes.

Exacerbated by the complexity in their lives, feeling trapped in claustrophobic domestic dissonance, some participants felt they could find or reclaim space and light by decanting the contents of their house, often just shifting stuff elsewhere.[246] Less as more: less of the life facilitating stuff makes space more livable.[247]

A home without signs of life also reflects the *new,* the unused. Although being new suggests being up-to-date, it also reflects the privilege of being the first person, free from visible use, of wear and tear by others *before* you. However, where dreams of a perfect home are *continually* elevated, beyond financial means and ability to engineer change—to *continually* renew, the home is left behind. In the gulf of disappointment, the renovation industry and *designer* home wares retail trade step in, helping us *make do* with small upgrades—shiny new taps or showerheads (Figure 4.16[248]). The prevalence of home improvement product advertising indicates the highly stylised, brand new *magazine home* has marketable appeal to consumers; immaculate and sterile interiors, no marks on white goods, splash-free tiles and glassy surfaces. Even the people in images appear sanitised and squeaky clean, with manicured hands, fresh makeup, styled hair and new-look clothes.

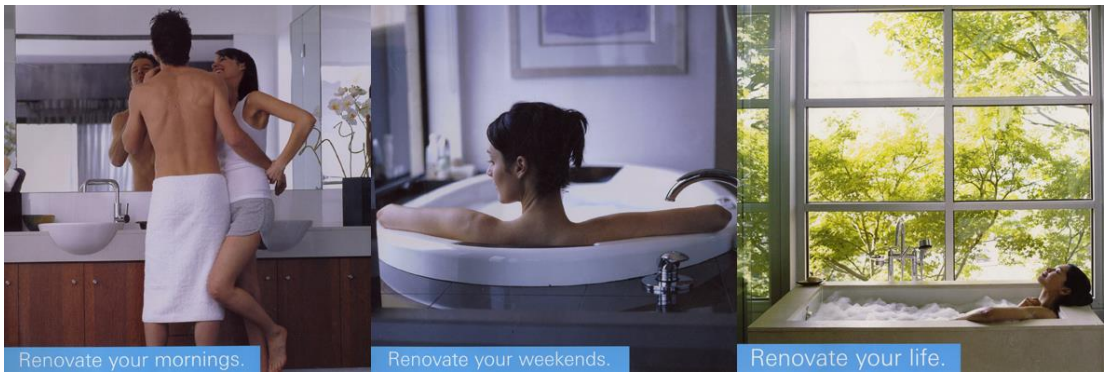


Figure 4.16: Advertisements for a plumbing supply business, more context than fixtures

[246] Often a shed or garage, refer section 4.4. The growth in the self-storage industry bears testament to this need to be find more space in the home, and further DIY projects to create places to store stuff are increasingly popular (Cwerner & Metcalfe, 2003).
[247] Adapted from 'less is more'; phrase from a 1855 poem by Robert Browning, made popular by architect L. Mies van der Rohe, and adopted by others espousing a simple life (Andrews & Urbanska, 2009).
[248] Image taken from back covers of Handyman Magazine, participant resource, Paperbark P026b.

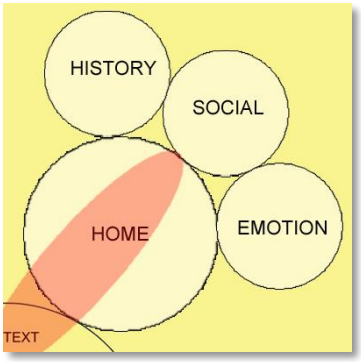
The renewal behaviour—making new of bathrooms and kitchens, the replacing of *tired* furniture, the addition of upmarket fixtures—is all in the quest for a simpler thus low maintenance, more organised thus clutter-free, cleaner thus easily cleaned, stylish and perhaps more admired home. Although participants reported shopping for ideas from magazines, frequently they also shopped for ways to maintain the fresh, clean look of a new home, ultimate through the purchase of new products. In this respect, magazines were found to be successful in converting passive audience to active consumer, whether renter or homeowner, dreamer or realist. Participants were found to either buying fixtures, fittings, materials and tools in order to begin activity (*having* then *doing*) or beginning a project then acquiring more materials and tools as the need arises (*doing* then *having*)(refer section 3.5).

Participant responses, in this and precedent surveys, have identified home as the focus for consumption through renewal activity, where people transform "home interiors as a mode of self-expression … a means by which people constructed themselves and their ideologies" (Miller, 2001, p. 10). Clarke concurs with Franklin's theory of a shift towards "greater home-centeredness and self-identification with a domain of control which lies in the home and consumption" (2001, p. 23), while exploring the home as the subject of transformation processes and a site of social aspiration.

The home context is both a place and a concept participants identify with on many levels, and also "a frame for, and as a container of, the material trappings of status" (Winter & Stone, 1998, p. 3). Influenced by fictional scenarios of perpetually brand new homes and real experiences of past and present use, participant renovation projects bind them with their own capabilities and with the expectations of others to remain updated. As issues relating to the presentation of home and presentation of self move closer together, the possibility of successfully creating a comfortable, spacious and well-designed home extend further away; beyond the home as a place

for doing things[249] and away from the people involved at a social, practical and emotional level.[250]

History, social and emotion



Social home

The initiator of a renovation project subjects the entire household to a period of disruption, mess and upheaval, sometimes imposing disorder to create order. Although the primary intention is changing the fabric of home, the pattern of living for everyone in the home is altered. Participants living alone were aware of inconveniencing only themselves, and perhaps their visitors, while others reported a much greater social impact, with DIY projects creating intense disharmony and tension in family relationships.

Case study participant Jasper had completed a major renovation before moving to Perth and had no intention of "living in a building site" again, for many of the reasons Fleetwood was experiencing with his renovation, specifically the difficulty of maintaining a balance between DIY and social activities in his leisure time. Jasper and his partner Pollywaffle worked together on the previous house and negotiated pressures on their home life by *sharing* the experience of continual disruption. Fleetwood wondered if his experience might have been different with a partner who had been more supportive of the inconvenience, but on another occasions

[249] For example, domestic leisure activities including entertaining and DIY.
[250] Interviews revealed that the pursuit of an ideal or dream home through renovation often takes people beyond their own boundaries of competence, space, time and money, remaining a place of potential in their imagination.

admitted he would have been unwilling to accept any help, discussed further in section 4.2.

Jasper's current house was not a building site on the same scale as his previous project or Fleetwood's, other than the initial few months when they had renovated the kitchen and bathroom at the same time. Since then DIY had been ongoing as time has allowed, mostly with the large scale remodelling of the garden, without much impact on the quality of life within the house. Unsure how long they would stay at the house, the DIY projects on the building have been modest improvements on what existed, firstly trying to make themselves *feel* at home, then provide a suitable environment for their pets and presentable one for visitors. However, by the end of the case study, and after eight years of renovation, Jasper's house was on the market for sale, ironically the real estate agent focusing on the word *balance* in their copy regardless of the *lack of* balance Jasper felt able to achieve living there (Figure 4.17).[251]

Figure 4.17: Real estate agent's street sign for Jasper's house as 'A Beautiful Balance'

Regardless of what Jasper was *doing* or had *done* to make the house more presentable and more comfortable to live in, the traditional 1930s style of the home with small windows, dark interiors and "bitsy room layout" remained too constricting for a couple who work from home.[252] Jasper was frustrated with the

[251] Typically highlighting how the *positive* terms used by real estate agents, appealing to the home-buying market, differ from *negative* experiences of everyday living.
[252] Using both spare bedrooms as offices/studios, space for work/leisure was contested when visitors stay. Ultimately moving beds and reshuffling furniture was too hard, clashing with work deadlines, so they stopped inviting people to stay (section 3.4).

physical form of the house in relation to their social life: "The layout made it hard to entertain people even through we tried different arrangements, so we stopped inviting friends over and instead met them somewhere out." They eventually decided to look for, or build, something spacious to accommodate a comprehensive office/studio space.[253] Reflecting on the eight years, Jasper described a period of "DIY pottering", bricolage style, happy to make the improvements without a primary agenda centred on economic gain. At first intended a long-term home, the necessary modifications still falling short of their needs, helped the couple understand the type of layout/form of house that would better suit life *with* their pets, *with* their work and *with* a social life.[254] Through improving the house and yet still meeting resistance, they better understood the type of house that would facilitate the way they wanted to live.

Emotional home – personal tensions

At the beginning of the case study period Lotus was still grappling with the loss of her husband after a long illness. As a practicing Buddhist she spent time in their previously shared meditation space, a sunroom, after his death performing rituals to "send him on his way". Lonely in the house Lotus retreated from parts of it, angry at being left alone she ripped out curtains she had come to hate and destroyed the garden they had created together including traces of her husband's hobby, model trains. Lotus avoided using the sunroom for a long time, but finding emotional strength wanted to "reclaim", both the lost physical and mental areas of the house.

Having *deconstructed* her garden and her life as a couple, Lotus was ready to reconstruct her space. She recalls suddenly noticing the house as "run down" and invested her energy in "making it fresh again", essentially refreshing her life, making it light, bright and new after a long period of emotional darkness. Now able to plan

[253] At the time of writing, Jasper and Pollywaffle were halfway through a new-build project on a DIY basis, one that attracted the interest of GD (www.maisondecour.wordpress.com).
[254] Jasper recognised it was a period of considerable personal growth, in trying to transform the house it transformed their understanding of the space they wanted to live in.

without compromise, she was eager and impatient to start making change, yet concerned that she no longer had her husbands' support or affirmation:

Limited by minimal resources, chiefly budget and assistance, Lotus began to *potter* with the home and garden alone, taking small steps and reclaiming her identity. At the same time Lotus started decorating the house and remodelling the garden, empowered "being busy and creative" and in anticipation of the end result,[255] Fleetwood was also adjusting to solo life. Like Lotus, Fleetwood was dealing with emotional trauma of separation, reflecting on years of inertia with his project at the first interview.[256] Fleetwood's total home renovation was significantly larger than the DIY project Lotus was contemplating, but their struggles with solo decision-making and days of solitary labour were much the same.

The disruption in Lotus' home life *began* with emotional detachment then moved to physical disruption, however, for Fleetwood it was the opposite. Having ripped the house apart and turning it into a building site, the tension between Fleetwood and his partner reached breaking point. With no kitchen and a single bathroom used to wash dishes, laundry and tools as well as bodies, his partner demanded they move out. Fleetwood later moved back into the house alone and unmotivated, like Lotus he felt disoriented living on his own, vacillating between sadness and anger, ultimately resulting in apathy about the project and the house itself.

[255] Lotus had decided she wanted to have a garden party to thank friends and family for supporting her at the time of her husband's death; social commitment became a powerful motivator.
[256] Unable to work towards on the previous goal, life with his partner in the finished house, Fleetwood became de-motivated, only just re-starting before being invited to take part in the study.

Living in a building site reinforced Fleetwood's sense of dislocation from any sense of normality, sleeping on a mattress on the floor without any of the usual comforts around him. By the first interview in 2009, Fleetwood had adopted a canine companion and started work on the house again; still no laundry or kitchen, only a table in the main room piled high with food, utensils, toaster, kettle and crockery. Interior spaces were filled with materials, tools, hardware supplies, tools, dog toys, bicycles, clothes, gym equipment, golf clubs and a pram that belonged to a friend left there temporarily (Figure 4.18). The house, like a snow globe after shaking, resisted Fleetwood's attempts at keeping it tidy.[257]

Figure 4.18: Fleetwood's house, back wall removed reveals home as a messy, dirty building site

By the last interview, two years and seven months after the first and nine years after starting the renovation, Fleetwood's life was moving towards a more positive psychological and physical state. The house was nearing completion; cabinetry

[257] It is this sense of "swimming against the tide" that Fleetwood, Jasper and other participants found wore them down most, working to exhaustion yet not *seeming* to make progress.

installed in the kitchen and laundry and new furniture already in place. Fleetwood found the return to a "normal life" alien after a long time camping within the four walls, at first disoriented and not wanting to use and "spoil" new appliances he would still wash dishes in the bathroom sink.[258]

Fleetwood later reflected on living in a building site in the context of his suburban and professional life: "This has been like trying to fit a square peg in a round hole, and it is just *exhausting* trying to make it work. I wouldn't do it again". Commuting to a city office every day, he presented a professional front, productive and organised, then returned to mess and chaos, and an apparent lack of progress. Although Fleetwood was conscious of his personal struggle between the duelling realities of home and work, he also acknowledged the impact renovating was having on his social life, and the conflict of interests with any free time.[259]

History - past lives and seeking renewal

Renovating to renew partly reflects a desire for prestige, having the resources and/or capacity to rip out old things and bring in the newest and latest fixtures and fittings, but it also symbolises the rejection of history,[260] past fashions, materials, and layouts, and past lives. The survey indicated the lived in feel of an older house was *least* desirable in an ideal home (Figure 4.15), signs of life seemingly distasteful, disturbing or disliked, implying a lack of tolerance for the pre-habitation of others. For many participants the almost forensic need to remove traces of others became provocation for renovating or decorating upon moving into what they called a "new", but not newly built, home. Admiring a home that does not *appear* lived in reinforces the evident appeal of those uninhabited vogue magazine interiors; bright, brand-new, fresh and on the cusp of emerging design trends. Conversely, the struggle with everyday detritus and clutter may account for seeking

[258] The bathroom had not yet been renovated. Reluctance to use fittings for the first time reinforces the value people place on the brand new, the shiny *magazine* home, not wanting signs of life to spoil the illusion. Refer section 4.3.
[259] *Free* time alludes to leisure time unencumbered by work commitments but for DIYers free time also significantly represents work done without accounting for time/labour financially.
[260] With the exception of things that are *collectable* or high value—quality antiques, etc.

psychological renewal through physical renewal, and the desirability of space and light.

In survey responses for case study participants, Lotus recognised her current home was in need of freshening/facelift/decorating, Jasper that his home was in need of major improvement and for Fleetwood, the house was relatively new, and would not need decorating for several years. Fleetwood's response was based on the future state of his house, rather than in real time—the house was still a building site. Likewise, in Lotus' initial interview, she focused not on the current home but her first home of married life, a "modern looking place … with a barn roof … a lot of glass, and open, big sunroom and kitchen". Her husband, a State Housing Authority employee, had the opportunity to build a new home; a young architect provided a modern design, breaking from traditional house typologies. The design brief focused on discussions around a future lifestyle that would include children and pets:

PARTICIPANT CONVERSATIONS

Lotus: We talked about the sort of **lifestyle** we wanted and the guy [architect] came up with it and at that stage both of us liked people and liked entertaining and we only had two bob to bless ourselves with.

Pollywaffle: Did you pick a style for the look of the house?

Lotus: Yes we did. We actually talked to the architect about the **lifestyle** we wanted, we wanted it to be open plan, not very costly - we had a budget. We both visualised how we wanted a place, and he came up with the idea, and then we liked what he came up with... just one plan. We did a lot of talking first about what we wanted... he was young, lots of ideas, and I think we actually did the reviewing of our ideas on the spot ... it was a long time ago.

As noted, *modern* had positive connotations for participants, many selecting modern over the notion of traditional as an important aspect of an *ideal* home; however, it was unclear how each person interpreted the word, whether about style or construction. Paradoxically, some modern construction is considered undesirable, of low quality, weak design and poor build standards. Generic mass housing projects are recreating issues people associate with *traditional* housing

(Jenman, 2000; D. Ryan, 1997). In a news interview, Canberra architect Andrew Collins is openly critical of the current developments he feels mirror the "1980s blunders", and suburban "brick boxes":

> People don't want a 450sq m home with redundant, generic spaces. If we want people to live in their homes longer, we have to build homes that people desire to live in and that reflects their lifestyle. (Nadin, 2012)

The word *lifestyle* again appears in popular discussion, here linked with house layouts, yet lifestyle remains ill defined and therefore of little use in progressing discourse on house design (section 3.2). According to Nadin, "worst of all, basic principles are absent in the designs … making the homes unpleasant to live in and costly to maintain" (2012), but he does not expand on ways longevity and suitability of building stock can be achieved, other than to say that spaces should be organised around the circulation. Used positively, however, the word *traditional* in association with built form can include the qualities that lead to heritage listing, or the valued historical, cultural and environmental characteristics of vernacular architecture. In addition, established suburbs where traditional homes and mature street planting has evolved over time are nearly always more desirable and less *generic* than the rash of speculative building projects spreading out from urban areas (Dovey, 1994).[261]

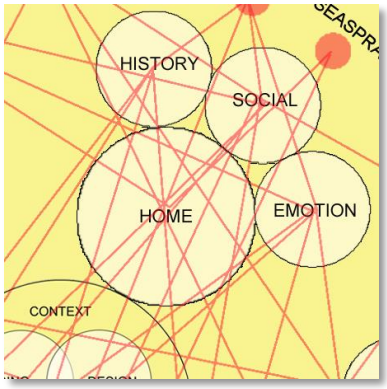
To this cohort, a *non-traditional* home is more appealing, more likely to satisfy the desire for a more modern, imaginative and spacious residence. This is unsettling; if the *traditional* home, broadly interpreted as the *older* home, is generally rejected in the pursuit of a better life, the enormous wealth of housing stock over thirty years old is, conceptually at least, condemned. Built for longevity and local climatic conditions, these solid homes find themselves out of step with current ways of living, at best they can and arguably should be sensitively and sustainably

[261] Suburban sprawl is a controversial issue. Delivering the Great Australian Dream of home and garden to the masses, the low-density development and uniform housing style is associated with negative environmental, social and economic issues.

remodelled, at worst they will be bulldozed and valuable materials carted to landfill[262].

For participants, the desire to avoid the negative associations connected with the passage of time—and evidence of use—places the dreamscape firmly in a new future, many planning and/or starting DIY projects *anticipating* an improvement to ways of living. The cultural obsession with *the brand new,* modern thus non-traditional, is here fuelled by the media, real estate and retail industries, but focused mostly on future trends in material goods rather than services. Designers contribute to renewal through their commercial involvement with these industries, such as product design, rather than with homeowners battling with an aging home (discussed further in section 4.6). Without engaging designers, participants were prepared to copy ideas from popular sources such as magazines or television programmes, and develop a collage of *secondhand* ideas, rather than an individual interpretation of a dream life within their existing home.[263] Importantly, often missing the opportunity to realise a dream that is site specific rather than generic, and build on current and past fabric rather than sweeping it away.

Connecting context with dream space(s)



In chapter 3, an *ideal* lifestyle emerged through the media as a professionally created dreamscape of what is *possible*; a mirage of your would-be future life,

[262] It is more cost effective (quicker and easier) to demolish a house than to selectively recycle parts. However, a number of salvage yards remain in urban/suburban areas in Australia.
[263] It is not always possible for individuals to reconfigure older homes to suit a modern way of living, as Jasper's story illustrated. In addition, the presence of asbestos as previously highlighted, makes it unsafe to retain or remodel some building stock, especially in Perth.

within reach but never quite realised. Articles, images and adverts transmitted by magazines, television programmes, books and the Internet presented reality as a mimesis of *perfect* lives led by *others*, *ideal* homes available for imitation. Rather, data revealed that the lifestyle needs and desires of the cohort identified comfort not elegance; balance not excess, use and sociability not wasted leisure time, and a home life that values relationships and personal interests.

The media promotion of dream homes as spaces of harmony and order, as places without the detritus and noise[264] of *real* lives, were found to be inspirational but misleadingly devoid of life. The *ideal* home in real terms embraced a "return to basics"[265], yet there is nothing rudimentary, simple or basic about the way dream homes are presented to the public, filled with subtle product placement and stylistic enhancement. The basic act of living appears to take participants messily away from the simplicity they long for. Likewise, the instinctive desire to enhance and improve generates a never-ending cycle of rejection and renewal, rejecting reality, the *real* in favour of the *ideal*. In both cases, the relationship between the material world (conveyed by the media) and the social/personal world of home is out of balance, presenting a clear challenge for designers (discussed further in section 4.5).

The media, through the samples reviewed, portrays lifestyle as some *thing* that is tangible and within reach and yet the survey highlights a lack of *thingness*. For participants, lifestyle at home touched on the importance of relationships and creative personal interests, yet there was a lack of specificity about many of the responses. Lifestyle appeared to exist in the liminal space between real and imagined patterns of living, where signs of use, second-hand lives, fragmented routines and disrupted emotional and physical spaces are made new, re-constructed, refreshed and re-inhabited.

[264] For example, to include visual, physical, social and emotional 'unwanted signals'.
[265] Participant Diva, seeking greater simplicity, less clutter, more space, fewer material objects.

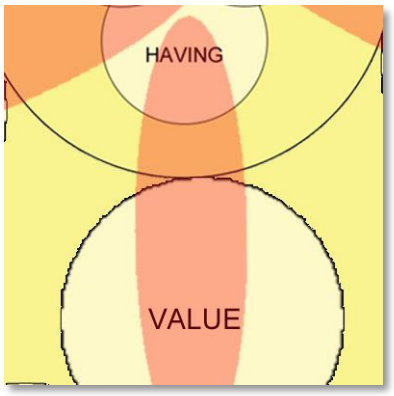
4.4 Having

At the centre of the global and local territory we individually and collectively inhabit, findings highlighted a hierarchy of physical and psychological aspects of home and the relationship between home and human needs. This section investigates other aspects of behaviour, seeking to determine:

(i) the material nature of human wants and desires in relation to the fabric of home renovation activity,
(ii) perceptions of value linked with modifying the home, to include personal and projected images of the homeowner, and
(iii) key aspects of home renovation as a consumption activity, to include both conventional and alternative resource gathering practices.

Individual motivations for change are explored; together with the way our home and lives are modified through consumption activities, both conscious attempts to modernise and maintain a home that is *up-to-date*, and the (often) unconscious creep of material goods into our living space. For some participants the house appears to be more important as a commodity and symbol of personal economic success than a place of history, emotion and social life as seen in the previous section. As *context* represents the external influence on the way people build collective and personal identities, *having* reflects the internal perception of identity formed through personal, social and cultural constructs.

Value



Values and culturally oriented choices

The AECP amongst other class analysis studies[266] identifies a strong link between people's values and culturally oriented choices relating to taste and leisure and perceived class positioning. Bourdieu extends this link to include the influence of education on class structures, suggesting that higher levels of education equate to higher levels of cultural capital, something transmitted through choices made in relation to the home (1986). Indeed, participants in both the AECP and this study believe education is an important factor for getting on in life[267], and although the notion of social or professional standing was not explored in depth with participants, most considered themselves to be of middle or upper-middle class (Figures 4.19).

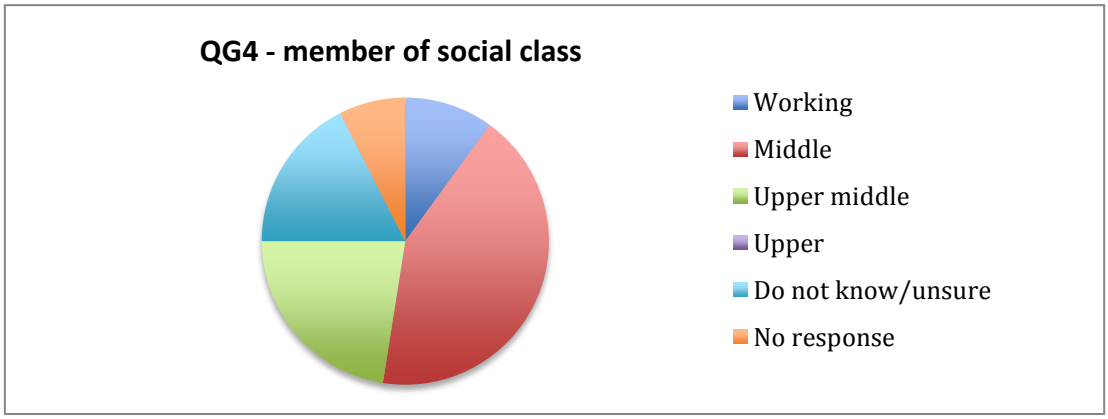


Figure 4.19: Self-assessment of class

[266] For example, 'Class Structure of Australia Project', 1991, that produced a seven-class structure (Western, 2000).
[267] Survey question G5, refer Appendix 8.

In spite of the predominance of middle aged, professional, and self-assessed middle or upper-middle class people in this study, there were some surprising similarities with AECP responses, including the perception of status. Status, when taken to mean "a set of attitudes and values … [and] competence in social settings" (Sullivan, 2002, p. 149) is also transmitted through the home, and as such links the choices made to satisfy human wants and desires centred on home with taste and perceptions of class stratification (Najman & Western, 2000).

In chapter 3, the relationship between life chance and life choice was found to be a key aspect of the lifestyle paradigm (section 3.2). Investigating connections between education, status and taste, the survey included AECP questions relating to taste in art, clothes, social and leisure activities, family and individual education and work backgrounds, personal qualities, and opinions on politics, culture, success and class. The survey also extended the inquiry to preferences for house and furniture, and the reasons connected to participant choices.

With almost three-quarters of survey participants (72.34%) collecting things around them on an individual basis, bricolage style, rather than an emphasis on overall composition or style, the majority of homes *do not* resemble the carefully manicured and arranged interiors on display in magazines. In terms of selecting furniture for the living room, personal taste accounted for over one-fifth (21.6%) of responses, most (17.5%) indicated items were chosen to match other possessions and one-tenth (10.8%) brought items from their previous home. All of these choices contribute to what makes home for forty participants, suggesting taste and preference contribute strongly to consumption patterns in relation to furnishing needs.

When asked about *reasons* for making purchasing decisions, responses echoed the qualities most important in their ideal home—comfort, practicality and functionality. As a description of interior furnishings, *traditional* mirrored that of the home, rating very low with choosing the main items of furniture. Aesthetic qualities and good design still featured as significant aspects for selecting material

goods in these categories,[268] but the emphasis was on how items would contribute to the day-to-day lives of participants.

Presentation of self as homeowner

Although home has emerged as a carrier of socio-economic codes and a canvas of and for personal expression and aspiration, both the study survey and AECP results suggest that home is, ideally, a place of comfort and convenience. However, this study does not entirely support AECP findings, that personal needs help people resist the expectations of others:

> A place to *be* and *do* in rather than as a stage that has to be prepared to support a set of performances directed to audiences outside the immediate networks of kith and kin…. Home as being primarily for the benefit of those who live there. (Bennett et al., 1999, p. 31)

Questions about entertaining as a leisure activity were added to the survey, revealing that participants regularly opened their homes to audiences *beyond* kith and kin, and as such the *maintenance of front* is of particular importance to most of them (Figure 4.20) (refer section 3.4).

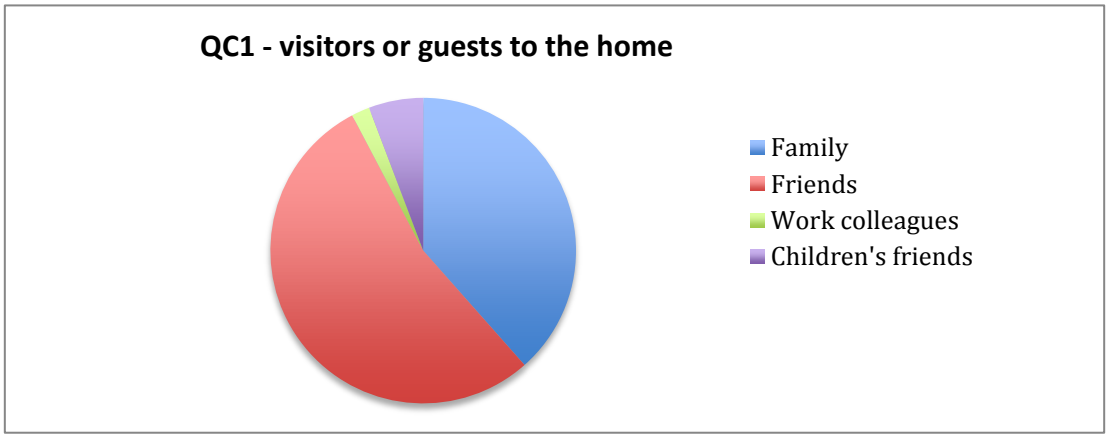


Figure 4.20: Relationship of visitors or guests to the home

Erving Goffman's observations on performance, suggest behaviour changes depending upon the audience and intended projection (1969). Describing a theatre by way of example, Goffman refers to the props and set as carriers or *sign-vehicles*

[268] For example, well-designed was a key characteristic of an ideal home to respondents.

of specifically cultivated information, and the stage "where the performance is presented" (1969, p. 231), identifying the living room typically as a *front of house* or stage area. Interpreted this way, participant homes were spaces that accommodated various performances of living, sometimes hosted orchestrated social events, were sometimes the location of impromptu activity such as a hobby or craft, and at other times a place of deliberate upheaval, such as during DIY.

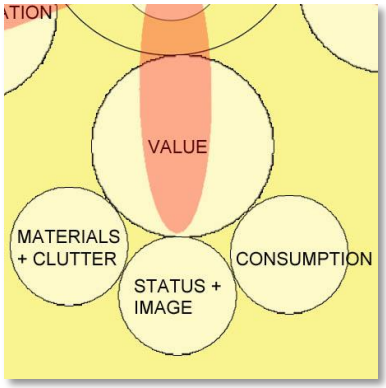
Some participants felt great pressure to present an acceptable front, responding to the opinions of their peers and the impressions *made on them* while being entertained in other people's homes and in restaurants. Participants spoke of ideas they gleaned from television programmes, predominantly those featuring display-oriented activities such as decorating, gardening, cooking, but also from retail displays specifically targeting entertaining such as gourmet kitchens/outdoor kitchens and BBQ decks. Internalising these contextual influences, a few participants actively tailored their homes as entertainment spaces and presented themselves as capable host; acting in a way that is "socialized, moulded, and modified to fit in with the understanding and expectation of the society with which it is presented" (Goffman, 1969, p. 44).

Although the AECP study reports a greater focus on taste (good or bad) in relation to inter-personal conduct rather than home design and architecture, it is through activities such as entertaining that individuals have the opportunity to display or respond to matters of taste through the presentation of self *and* home together (Bennett et al., 1999). The desire to entertain in a way that meets social expectations provides powerful motivation for creating a home bridging psychological, social and aesthetic housing needs, and is just one reason why many people modify their homes. There is social value in presenting the right front, and therefore in maintaining the space that both frames and reflects the image of someone *living the dream*, or at least meeting culturally oriented expectations.[269]

[269] For example, the image of a home 'to be proud of', as a display of taste and status, is both influenced by and conveyed via the media.

The consumption of media promoting house and garden is fairly consistent across national (AECP) and selective the survey samples in this study, suggesting the cultural norms linking with the *maintenance of front* are also consistently reinforced. The motivation to make a particular impression appears closely linked with the media portrayal of home as an exhibition space and gallery as "style statements" (McCloud, 2006, p. 29), rather than genuine autobiographies of their inhabitants. This is not to say that all participants have been motivated to make changes to their homes in order to meet wider expectations or contemporary trends, however, the frustration conveyed by some participants about their inability to entertain in their home suggests having the *right* front is an important issue.[270]

Consumption, status and material



Consumption activity

Survey questions on home improvement activity identified homeowners who engage in DIY as a consumption-oriented activity, and as a part of everyday life. These respondents frequently visited hardware and home retail stores (Figure 4.22), frequently engaged with DIY home improvement and/or home R&M activities, indicated the importance of doing something useful in domestic leisure, and listed a wide range of DIY tasks undertaken in the last ten years (Figure 4.23). Participants responses identified many as leisure-time *craft consumers* (Campbell, 2005), where "being a competent practitioner requires appropriate consumption of goods and services" (Warde, 2005, p. 145), as discussed in section 3.5.

[270] For example, Jaspers' frustration with home is also an issue of logistics, refer section 4.3.

Although obtaining and installing new items during the course of improvement is clearly a consumption activity, the reasons for acquiring new things varies from replacing worn out, tarnished or broken items, to adding things to a house that satisfy an unmet need. To Campbell, people as consumers have an insatiable desire for new products, new experience and new ideas—at each turn preferring new over the familiar (1992). Campbell recognises the activities of appropriation, collection, assembly, personalisation and customisation, typified by the *creative activity* of DIY, as components of contemporary craft consumption. However, he differentiates it from the actual creation or production of a product, which adheres most closely to the meaning of craft as something made or fashioned by hand.

Figure 4.21: Jasper's kitchen – a drawer of dissonance

Campbell believes that most home improvement activities represent the collection and "construction of assemblages" (2005, p. 34), either by piecing together purchased components, materials and fixings, or by modifying something using new parts, in both cases requiring the purchase and use of tools.[271] At interviews, many participants pointed to collections of tools and materials that filled sheds and garages, cupboards and sometimes kitchen drawers with DIY tools and assemblages

[271] For example, self-assembly appeared popular with the participants, when asked (QC7) about tasks completed in the last ten years, the option 'assembled IKEA furniture' featured highly (Figure 4.23).

of material goods (Figure 4.21). Some were clearly in use, plugged in and surrounded by half finished work, however, the vast majority of equipment was stored on shelves in anticipation of future use or impatiently cast aside; piles of metal, plastic and wood, stacked boxes and jumbles of leads.

The significance of DIY as a consumption activity, according to Campbell (2005), is that people *choose* to take a hands-on approach rather than take any other option: preferring to buy a finished product, hire tradesmen, or pay a designer to resolve and manage a project. He contends there is a "large population of consumers who want to be successful in creating their own aesthetically significant end products" (2005, p. 33), and that this collection and ensemble activity has "a crucial autotelic or aesthetic dimension … [that has] a fundamental resemblance to 'play'" (2005, p. 34). The appeal of *playing* with ideas, materials and tools no doubt shared by the large audience who watch the popular television makeover programmes, buy the DIY manuals and home improvement magazines, and who visit the DIY warehouses at weekends. Indeed, of all the places visited in leisure time by participants, hardware stores were the most frequently attended (Figure 4.22) (Appendix 1).

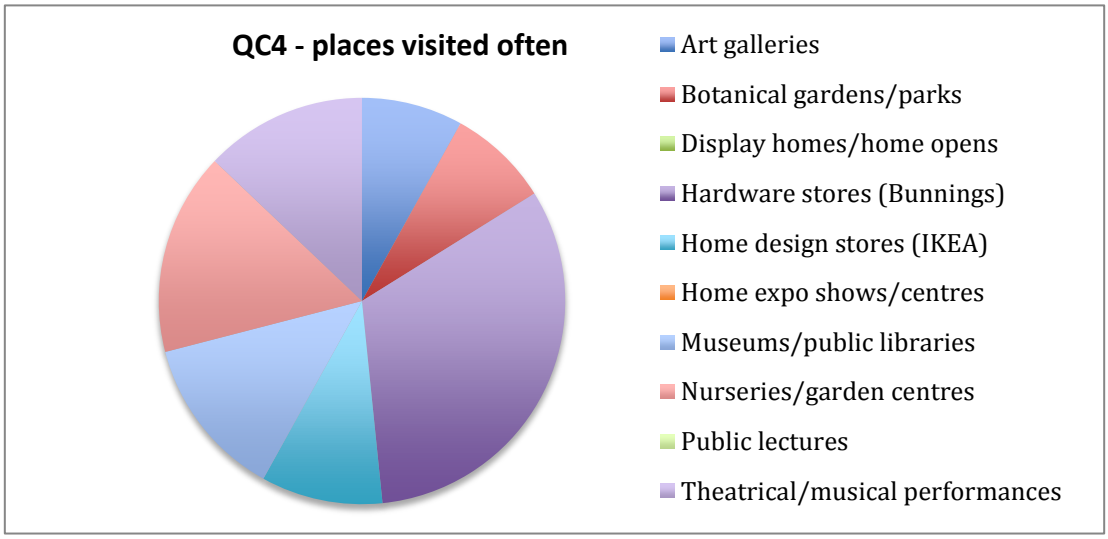


Figure 4.22: Places visited in leisure time (often)

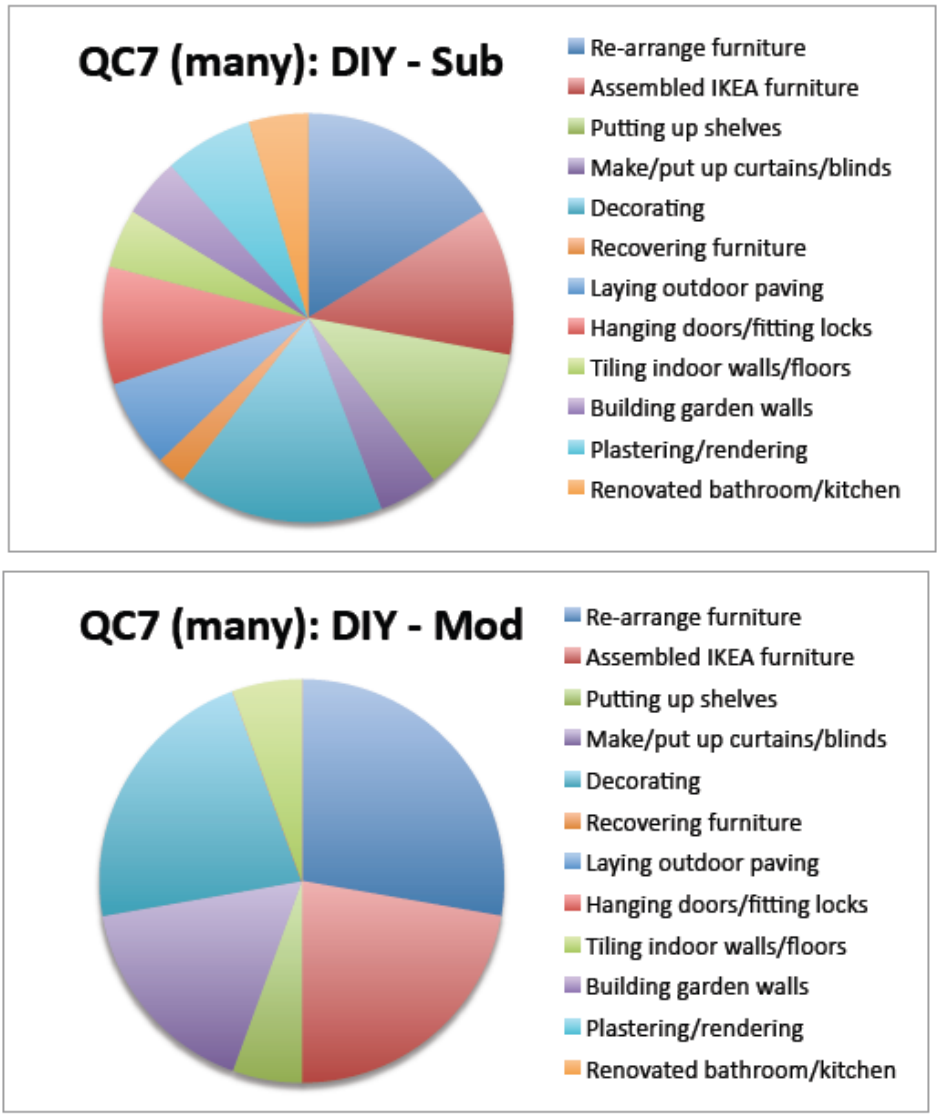


Figure 4.23: DIY Tasks done many times - substantial (Sub), moderate (Mod) DIY experience

The kitchen exemplifies Campbell's commentary on change and choice, essentially an assemblage of components, cupboards, appliances, surfaces and items on display. Assigned cultural significance, the kitchen "mirrors … the great social changes that have taken place in the last hundred years" (Conran, 1977, p. 1), and significantly "represents the centre of home, socially and spatially" (Supski, 2007, p.9). A national investigation into US consumer spending on home improvement[272], between 2006-7 found the kitchen consumes "more attention, energy, finances and

[272] As part of a ten-year study conducted by CNW Research, Homesight investigated 3 million home improvement projects and 1 million respondents (VSR, 2011).

complex decision-making than any other project, short of building a new house" (Troland, 2011).

Identifying kitchen renewal as a specific consumption practice extending beyond functionality and practicality, Shove contends, "the material configuration of the home relates to the accomplishment of variously valued forms of social practice" (2007, p. 23). Such practice includes current and anticipated ways a home has to accommodate families and visitors, and amplifies to reflect cultural values. Survey responses reveal that many of the participants entertain *in* the kitchen, thus a highly visible and functional space, and had actively engaged in consumption practices in relation to home and specifically kitchen improvement (Figure 4.23[273]). Just over half of the participants had renovated the kitchen within the last ten years, with nine only once and eleven on more than one occasion. At the other scale of complexity and cost, all participants had assembled IKEA furniture and almost all had decorated and re-arranged furniture.

Alternative consumption practice(s)

Participant data linked DIY activity with consumption on many levels; not only the most immediate purchase of tools, supplies, clothes and materials, or the hire of trades people, but also less direct ways. Participants purchased furniture or art as a treat or *reward* for enduring the mess and hardship of DIY,[274] and also as an opportunity to update other things in the house for fear of looking shabby or out of place in comparison to the renewed and refreshed area. During the case studies, a number of indirect consumption activities also surfaced, often through project management and organisational activities such as driving to the refuse tip or hardware retail stores, feeding those who come to help, and even gifts as thanks for the loan of materials and time (Figure 3.10).[275]

[273] DIY tasks and frequency of completion as listed form the basis the skill matrix (Appendix 7).
[274] For example, participants report taking a DIY approach saves the money by taking on all the work, ordering and fetching supplies, demolition and installation. Building is hard on the household budget, and on the body when it is not a regular pursuit–hence the perception of hardship (Moore, 1991).
[275] Gestures of reciprocity: behaviour that involves both direct and alternative (non monetary) forms of consumption.

A form of craft consumption, DIY home improvement frequently links the activity (*doing*) closely with the acquisition of professional or trade services and items such as materials and tools from retail suppliers, it also accommodates non-commercial forms of appropriation (Campbell, 2005; Shove, 2007; Shove & Pantzar, 2005; Warde, 2005). Alternative options for acquiring the materials and hardware for DIY, such as repurposing, recycling, or up-cycling,[276] have been demonstrated most clearly within the case study projects, and especially in relation to bricolage practices where materials are to hand/*on stock* (refer Figure 3.16).

1. Rescued table - rubbish/verge collection find, recycled picket fence edging added
2. Recycled gate, re-sized and repainted
3. Recovered bottles, found in rubbish pits in garden when digging, cleaned for display in bathroom

Figure 4.24: Examples of 'alternative economy' projects around Jasper's house

All of the case study participants have utilised materials they already had for new DIY projects; Jasper recycled or reused objects or materials found at the house without altering them, such as roof tiles and decking timbers, Lotus recycled fabrics to make cushion covers and Fleetwood reconditioned old furniture. Jasper also disassembled a metal postal desk found in the cellar after purchasing the house, cut it in half and re-worked the top part as a garage storage cabinet. Jasper and Fleetwood rescued materials or components during selective demolition, and also recovered building site waste (Figure 4.24). Jasper and Fleetwood mentioned the role of friends in the acquisition of materials, both in donating materials that would have been thrown away and lending tools for one-off tasks. All of these exchanges and exercises resulted in low cost solutions and creative or social opportunities.

[276] All ways of utilising items no longer required for their original purpose or in their original context or form.

For Jasper, material salvaged or donated by friends was often the provocation for another project, or when project was already under consideration, for the form it took. Planning a garage workshop, Jasper designed it materials the materials *to hand*, mostly timber lying "around the house we wanted to use up", together with "doors and things dumped in skips", a project discussed further in section 4.5. Participants Jasper and Paperbark often discussed their "rich pickings" from residential verges, appropriating materials discarded by others during local authority free bulk waste collections of household junk, and from building waste skips. Both Paperbark and Jasper *rescue* what they consider to be valuable material, mostly timber, and either store it for their own use at a later date or give it to someone they know will use it.

Builders are known to throw new and untouched materials into site skips, usually surplus to requirements, rather than return them to suppliers, such as bricks, and also discard lightly damaged materials such as plasterboard as it is quicker (thus cheaper on labour) to get a new sheet than make any repairs. DIY practitioners are generally subject to fewer external constraints than a building contractor and therefore have the opportunity to evaluate and use materials in a different way. Counter to this, DIYers are usually cost-effective with materials rather than time. The case projects demonstrated the use of timber off-cuts and small quantities of materials that the building industry would deem *waste*, however, DIY can still be wasteful. Some building or recycling tasks require more skill and patience than some amateur builders have; a trial and error approach from a lack of experience can easily generate waste as a succession of failures are discarded. Although Jasper was very conscious about minimising waste around the home, he knew it was not always feasible to reuse or recycle. Some projects would take too long if he were to utilise the materials he has stockpiled, so he chose to buy new materials:

QUOTE PARTICIPANT CONVERSATIONS

Jasper: You've got your own professional pride and it kind of wears you down, and you've got this battle in your head about, well you're kind of assessing yourself, its got to be right and its got to be good, but it gets really tiring.

Fleetwood: Yeah, it is exhausting.

Jasper: Well, because you are doing that at work; constantly being critiqued at work and trying to perform a certain standard and if you are doing that in your own home as well and you've got this thing in your head that's 'oh no I've got to do this properly'. If you're the sort of personality that wants everything done right it actually can really do your head in.

The use of materials to hand, bricolage style rather than purchasing things purposefully for the project, also, according to Jasper, meant risking an outcome looking "too homemade". For both Jasper and Fleetwood, as designers who value professional standards and have high expectations of finished work, the term *homemade* had connotations of something being poorly design and poorly constructed. For these participants, when the risk of doing sub-standard work was too great they would rather purchase new materials or hire skilled tradesmen who have the proper tools for the job.

There were a number of occasions when, in order to ensure a job was done well, participants would loan and borrow task specific tools from each other. Jasper in particular traded tools with others, mostly with Paperbark but also with Riot when living on the east coast. As close friends they shared practical interests and ever-present home improvement projects,[277] developing a system of non-cash exchange, with tools and materials, and also labour. Invariably when the tools were handed over, advice and related materials were also offered. The reciprocal exchange of knowledge and experience was found to be a common practice in groups within the same social circle, evidenced in many interviews with participants who tackled DIY projects and to varying degrees.

[277] Thus closely aligned with Atkinson's description of sustained activity as 'lifestyle DIY' (Atkinson, 2006), refer section 3.

Allocating resources

As previously noted, modification of home generates expenditure on furnishings as the new space emerges as a fresh canvas, feeding the hardware retail sector. With renovation, actively transforming the idea or dream into reality requires significant investment in tools, materials, supplies and the accumulation of how-to information, sometimes in the form of manuals, magazines or even compact discs sold with products. The storage space required for accumulated materials, tools and equipment has also been highlighted as part of a growing retail sector (section 4.4).

In choosing the "self-supplying labour" DIY approach, participants in this and the PAHR study invariably consider the work to be easy/within their capability, that they possess the relevant skills and that purchasing or hiring tools is affordable (Peng, 2009) (Figure 4.25). The findings show that the aggregation of experience and equipment increases the likelihood that people will undertake DIY projects in future. Even though regular DIYers, like Jasper and Fleetwood have a considerable range of tools, each project of any complexity was found to require *extra stocked*/additional items (section 3.5): consumable materials and hardware, nails, screws, adhesives, sandpaper, plus timber, metal and plastic components.

Many participants with DIY experience were conscious about minimising the outlay of money, particularly on hired labour, and according to the survey most consider DIY the primary way to save on the cost of a project rather than through material choices or investment in tools in this and the PAHR study (Figure 4.26[278]).

[278] Source of data: Peng (2009)

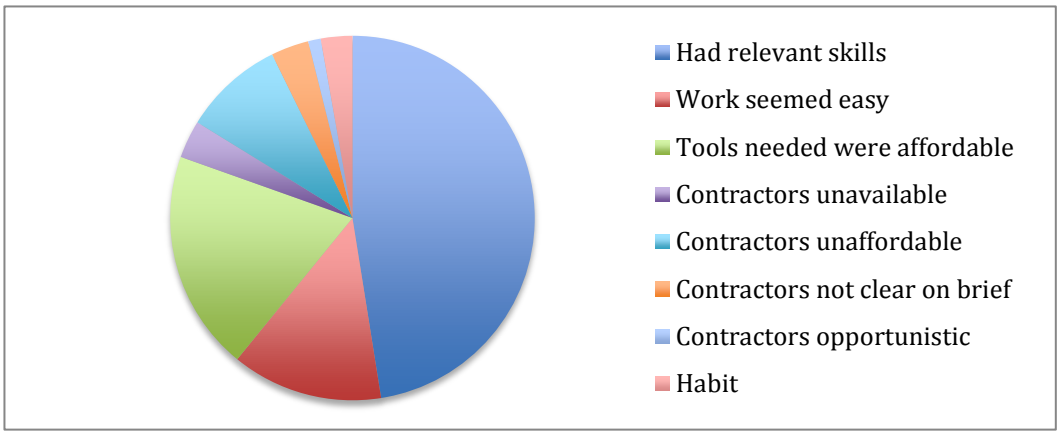


Figure 4.25: DIY-renovators response on why they did work themselves

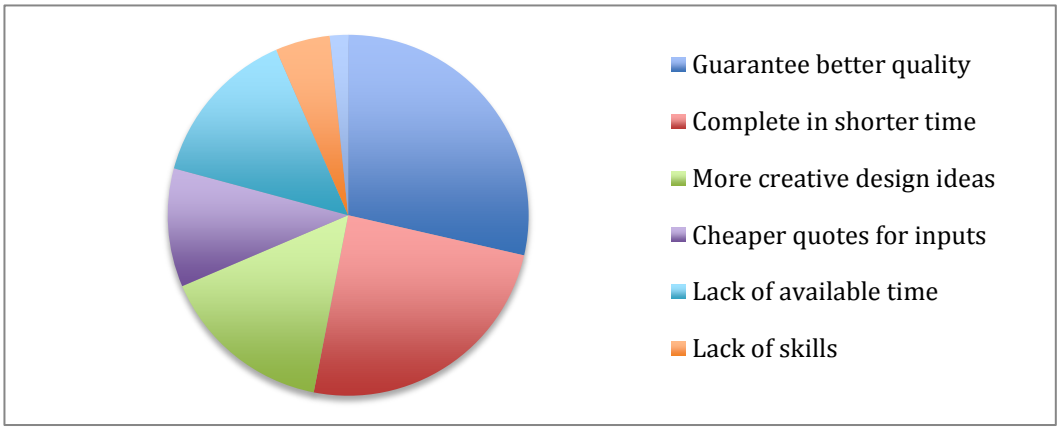


Figure 4.26: Hire-renovators response on why they hired others

Case study participants Lotus, Fleetwood and Jasper all chose to do most of the work on their projects, however, Lotus needed others to help as she "did not know how to do" tasks such as garden reticulation or install the water feature she had bought. Although Lotus did research around the tasks with suppliers/on the Internet, ultimately she was not interested in learning the technical details or taking on the responsibility of working with water and electricity. Contractors had been recommended to her, and she felt "justified" in spending money on specialist help having done most of the labour "for free", in other words, by herself or with the help of family members:

QUOTE PARTICIPANT CONVERSATIONS

Lotus: It was funny, I wanted to get rid of everything that was [him], I couldn't bear it - it [deconstructing joint lives] was the way I dealt with my grief... So I wanted to get rid of the [model] trains, I pulled up the tracks outside. Now I think, well I want to put my own garden in because its mine, and I want it to be aesthetically pleasing, something that I would like and like to sit in and invite people to.

For Lotus, engaging tradesmen/"tradies" to do reticulation meant paying for their skill, experience and the equipment they brought to the job, and in exchange expecting the job completed with considerable efficiency and insight. Further, contractors who are specialists, according to Peng's research findings, can "offer more creative ideas about design" (2009). Certainly, from personal experience, tradesmen *can* reduce the inconvenience to *normal* patterns of living by realising the project outcome more quickly, and often to a higher standard that the amateur builder or DIY-renovator. Contractors can also provide homeowners with access to trade discounts rather than paying retail prices for materials and supplies, and remove the need to buy tools specifically *for* the job; however, labour is considered the greatest cost component of most contract work (Moore, 1991; Peng, 2009).

Without exception, the participants interviewed all acknowledged being slower at completing projects than anticipated or hoped, and definitely much slower than someone with more experience. For Fleetwood this meant loosing out on a social life over years, as his time at weekends had been compromised by the decision to work on a DIY basis. For Jasper the time spent on DIY had a threshold, past which it moved from being enjoyable leisure to an obligation and chore:

QUOTE PARTICIPANT CONVERSATIONS

Jasper: It's been dragging on a bit now, but I am only spending about three hours a day on it. There is a point when the length of time you spend on something makes it become too much like work than leisure, and this is starting to become a bit of a chore now. A tradie would take less than a week and I've spent a month.

Pollywaffle: What was your expectation of the time it would take?

Lotus: Don't know, I honestly didn't have one. Oh, it hasn't taken that long, but when you are only doing it a few hours a day, by the time you get the tools out and you think about, there's always something you have to think about, so you think about it and you only get about an hour of productive work done.

Although the cost of contractor's time is something that all participants were eager to avoid or reduce, none of them put a dollar value on their own time. Many participants kept records of items bought or services paid for, but not one person in the study had tracked their own hours on a project, relying more on the tangible evidence of cost documented through receipts. Without an assessment of the value of their labour, people have a disproportionate understanding of how much a renovation project costs, however monitoring the overall cost was not critical given that none of the participants worked to a budget.[279] When asked whether she had a budget for the Zen garden, Lotus was unable to translate her image or plan of work into numbers, mostly due to her inexperience with DIY or home maintenance.

All three case study participants kept files of receipts throughout the duration of the DIY work on their homes, mostly in relation to materials and supplies rather than organisational costs including phone and electricity use, fuel, food for *helpers*—family and friends, laundering or purchase of work clothes, and other less obvious ancillary expenses. The retention of sales dockets, apart from the possibility of having to return faulty goods, appears to be a form of casual documentation rather than rigorous project management. Lotus in particular had

[279] Even though many DIYers track costs, according to Peng, "63% of renovators spent more than they estimated" (2009, 200). A decade-long research survey on home remodelling projects (over 3 million) in the US found that, on average, the actual cost was 14% over budget, further that the average time taken was longer than anticipated—2 years, with some kitchens taking up to 6 years (Troland, 2011).

no intention of adding up her receipts and finding out how much she had spent in case it made her feel guilty, and Jasper was resigned to the reality that "it costs what it costs". Only Fleetwood kept a closer eye on his expenditure, very much taking on the architect's project administration role for his own work, tracking all costs, although again with the exception of his time, and incidental items.

Status and image

Although it was not possible to gain an accurate pattern of consumption practices of participants on the basis of the data gathered, some comparisons could be made between three participants based on the information provided during the case study. Exploring the connections between conspicuous consumption and status or self-image, choices made during home renovation, such as fixtures, finishes and new furniture, revealed the appeal of presenting a completed picture of rejuvenation to others, sometimes before the project was even finished (Russo, 2013).[280]

When asked about purchasing preferences, each participant provided a different reason for the choice of furniture. Lotus selected to match items she already had referring to furniture brought from her previous home, but sometime later considered it too dark for the apartment, triggering a decorating project to *lighten* the overall effect, recovering the sofa and painting the walls. Lotus, having decided painting would be cheaper than buying new furniture (her preference), was able to relax and enjoy shopping for painting equipment and emulsion. A shade of white called *Princess Bling* was selected more for psychological reasons than practical, the human quality of it's name appealed to Lotus, the youthful nature amused someone in her senior years. Given the proliferation of pictorial colour charts with names rather than numbers in hardware retail stores, and comments from participants such as Lotus, the naming of paint is clearly invites customers to deliberate on what image they hope to project.

[280] For example, Fleetwood purchased up market furniture and high specification media equipment before the renovation had reached 80% complete.

Fleetwood had selected furniture to suit style of the current house, and his pattern of spending was entirely focused on the overall look he created for the finished house. Almost inevitably, Fleetwood had painted the interiors white, conforming to current trends in architecture (Hopkins, 2007), and during one visit Fleetwood tabled a brochure of the 'indulgently beautiful design luxury' sofa system he had just ordered in white leather (Figure 4.27).


Kato is designed for today's fast moving lifestyle. Compact styling and low-line profile make Kato perfect for apartments and studios.

Figure 4.27: Fleetwood's new sofa selected in anticipation of a 'fast moving lifestyle'.

Surrounded by the chaos of a building site, the gap between his reality and his imagined life was pronounced. For Fleetwood, purchasing the expensive new sofa before the space was ready helped him visualise a time when life would be better, *having* as a symbol of future *doing* (Figure 3.9). Ordering a piece of luxury furniture took him a step closer to the clean high quality environment he envisaged as home, the shape of the sofa having been identified on his house plan around eight years earlier. He referred to the "flashy sofa" as a "reward" for all the mess he'd been "putting up with" for years and the hard grind of renovating, but it was also symbolic of status, and suitably minimalist in style for an architects' home.

For Fleetwood's, changing from renter to homeowner marked the first shift in the way he felt about the property. As a renter he did not care about the living conditions, nor could he recall ever buying things *for* the house, all furniture was donated. Later he claimed to feel the opposite; obsessive even about construction details that would be covered up, and surface finishes or cabinetry details that no

one would notice. The sofa was just the first of many purchases of "nice stuff" to suit the rejuvenated, restyled and reinvented architectural interior, not least a large flat screen television, something that to Fleetwood was a symbol of the *normal* life he desired, watching movies or sport over the weekend with *nothing more to do* (section 3.3). In the last interview, Fleetwood felt that as the house was coming together he had started to enjoy living there and his new purchases: "I've got nice gear which kind of makes you feel good—it's weird but it does kind of make you feel good."

For Jasper, the selection of furniture was usually to suit personal taste; the only new large piece of furniture acquired since starting renovation was, like Fleetwood, a leather sofa. The sofa was chosen for neat stylised aesthetic, but to meet a tight budget—not high on his priority for purchases. Although no connection between this purchase and any DIY work, once the deck was built, an outdoor setting was purchased in anticipation of entertaining outdoors. Ultimately the deck was rarely used as the couple adopted pets that needed containment. The outdoor setting eventually found itself in the same room as the sofa acting as a dining suite.

Jasper and his partner had to modify their use of the house and daily behaviour due to other members of the household rather than the purchase of commodities. The arrival of multiple rescue cats and kittens led to a large number of feline-oriented DIY projects accommodating the sharing and segregation of circulation for bipeds and quadrupeds. These included a large pet enclosure, cat flaps through all internal doors, and feline aerial walkways transecting the house. Co-habitation with a pet was more manageable for Fleetwood, especially during renovation when his dog has mostly been kept outdoors. Fleetwood would not alter the design to include any specific canine features, not even an access flap in the door. Pets, like people, find a way of adapting to houses whether or not they are well designed, although the retail industry has successfully convinced owners to buy pet furniture, bedding, toys and scratchy poles to help make pets feel *more* at home. Perhaps through the purchase of furniture, gadgets, appliances and commodities we are also trying to

make ourselves feel *more* at home, especially when the buildings themselves are no longer suited to our current ways of living.

Fleetwood pointed out that the layout of the original house no longer accommodated his preferred taste in contemporary furniture, and rather than explore partial renovation, he demolished the entire the living area, determined to have the features on his design plan and in his future life:

Fleetwood: From a practical point of view you couldn't fit a TV and couches in that [unimproved] room. In the 1940s people would have sat in that room in a couple of armchairs and listened to the radio. Things change.
Pollywaffle: How do you feel about the room now?
Fleetwood: Once it all gets clean and that floor is polished that will be it done. There will be none of that crap inside. It will be 'shoes off' as you come in the door, and when some furniture goes in there it will make a big difference, and the TV. I think when the nice stuff goes in it will make a huge difference.

Ironically, even after all the years of upheaval he still felt that fitting a contemporary sofa in that room was only just "doable, but it is still not perfect, so even with the amount of work I have done it is fitting a square peg in a round hole." For Fleetwood, modern furniture, as a symbol of our cultural, retail and social expectations, a symbol of success, appeared to take precedence over the original building form; "the spaces didn't work with modern day living, too small. Full stop."

Material culture dissonance

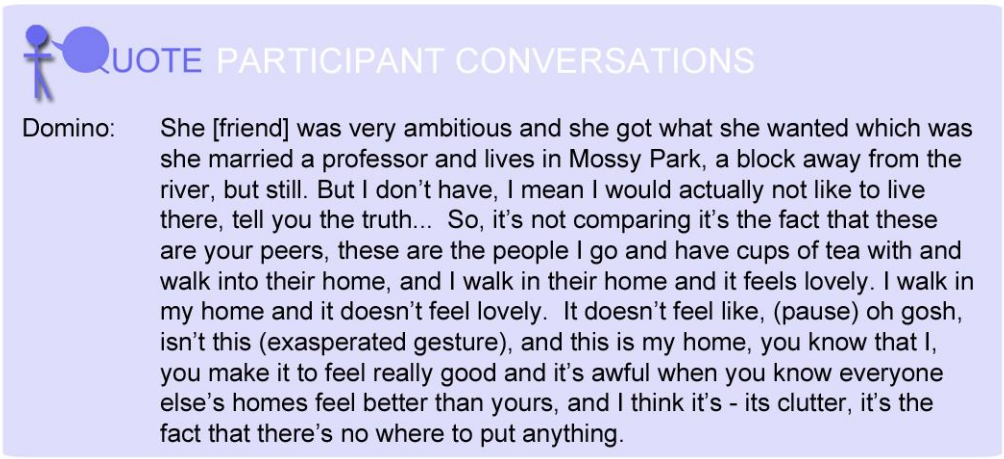
In an impromptu interview, Signal and sister Daisy talked over coffee about the struggle between design of homes and consumption behaviour, material acquisition and the clutter that results.[281] Daisy described how making renovation decisions lead to *dissonance,* reflecting wider issues many participants had with the material world, with their homes, with their stuff and with each other:

[281] Neither have design or DIY skills, in terms of changing home this contributes to their 'struggle'. Signal anxious about the aging home, reflected on a lifetime of accumulating stuff, refer section 4.2.

> We hold many cognitions about the world and ourselves; when they clash, a discrepancy is evoked … dissonance is unpleasant, [so] we are motivated to reduce or eliminate it, and achieve consonance (i.e. agreement). (McLeod, 2008)

With reference to the couples in this study, the provocation to change home life appears centred on a search for consonance. Some participant homes, while also building sites, *are* sites of negotiation between the inhabitants, the contents and changing desires, and at times the confrontational belief that a better life is within reach.

Issues revealing dissonance frequently surfaced during interviews with couples or groups. Signal and Seaspray did not agree about the need to downsize or modernise. Now their children had left home, Signal feared she would age with the house and sought avenues for rejuvenation, for Daisy the reclaimed home was rejuvenating enough. Another couple, Domino and Scooter disagreed strongly about the need for a shed, Scooter disregarding his wife's mounting anxiety about the house and the social failure it represents to her:



Diva and husband Emporio also presented as a couple living with dissonance. They were so conflicted about what they wanted—a modern minimalist lifestyle, and what they had—an older style house full to the brim with gathered stuff, they finally bought a brand new apartment to *solve* the issue. They escaped their life of

collecting and clutter at weekends, staying in the furnished apartment, shiny and styled, straight from the pages of a magazine.

Like Diva and Emporio, many participants tried disassociating with their habitual behaviour, collecting objects then rejecting the clutter, uncomfortably aware they were not in control of their own space. Deciding to increase the size of the home with an extension or adding storage space such as new shed, rather than changing consumption patterns is a consumption activity in itself. The dissonance between the *ideal* and *real* something these participants struggled with as they collected and gifted presents, exchanged and rented appliances, borrowed and bought material goods. Photographs illustrated narratives of the social and cultural lives of inhabitants, recording the evolution of participant houses over time, with purchases and subsequent DIY projects. With different owners in residence over different life stages, the messy provenance of a house is as messy as the collage of individual's lives. The modernised and materialised contemporary way of life is a disorderly existence, far from the co-coordinated magazine interiors with selective displays of *objet d'art*[282].

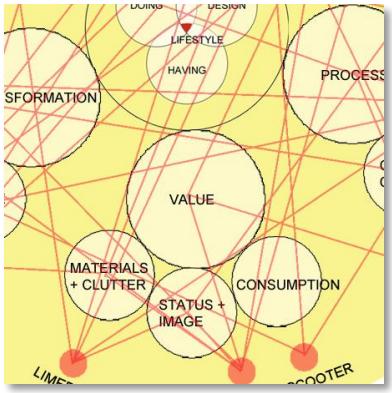
Participants presented themselves as homeowners in control, at least outwardly, during social occasions through role as host. The arrival of visitors to the home is the moment when inner and outer worlds collide, and many of the participant renovation projects focused on the social spaces where people were usually/would in future be entertained. Even for interview events, people frequently tidied their houses, set a table and dressed *up*. Although appearing in control, however, they spoke as people in conflict with their chaotic lives and their chaotic homes, people being carried along in a tide of consumption, trying to swim for the shore.

Interview conversations suggested that home ownership, the Great Australian Dream, promised access to something *better*—a better life, better belongings, better self-image, better use of time, better balance, better ability to take control. However, homeownership frequently materialised as a driver behind having *more,*

[282] For example, as those illustrated in magazine samples provided by participants.

more time, more space, more light, more money, and having more stuff quickly emerged as physically and psychologically problematic. For participants who embraced DIY culture and utilising resources[283] to hand or *on stock* (section 3.5), recycling, reshaping, reusing, borrowing and even scavenging, were all ways of overcoming the continual accumulation of new stuff. DIY home improvement, while largely a consumption activity, therefore also facilitates more sustainable and sociable practices[284] and contributes to perceptions of *self-sufficiency* (section 4.4).

Connecting having with dreams



DIY, a *craft consumption* activity, accounts for valuable resource use both in the pursuit of dreams and the escape from reality, engaging both humans and non-humans in the active reshaping of place. Taking a broad approach, as afforded by cross-disciplinary work, here—design *with* anthropology, the focus of this thread included the objects of use (tools, materials), behaviours and practices individually and the notion of lifestyle as a composite interlinked way of living driven by a desire for transformation. Construction work is a substantive and substantial form of consumption, however, unlike commercial building practices, DIY has the potential to facilitate recycling and reuse. Home-making activities demonstrate a powerful and insidious connection between human action and material culture, between *doing* and *having,* where:

[283] With the exception of time. Albeit reducing the outlay of cost, re-using materials to hand or say, getting old tools to work again, inevitably proved more time consuming than working with new materials or tools.
[284] For example, sharing tools/advice/time during DIY projects and entertaining to use renovated spaces after project completion.

> People mostly consume without registering or reflecting that what they are doing [is consuming] because they are, from their point of view, actually doing things like driving, eating or playing. (Warde, 2005, p. 150)

To address problems associated with consumption practices, is to understand the meaning and motivation behind the activity itself, however this also works in reverse. According to Ryan and Deci, motivation is highly valued both culturally and commercially because "motivation produces" (2000, p. 69) consumption activity, thus images of ideal homes *with* product placement tap into motivations linked with change. The findings have shown connections between motivation and value strengthened by pursuits such as DIY, embracing creativity, "among the most important and pervasive of all human activities" (Simonton, 2000, p. 151), relevant in a world filled with "the products of human inventiveness" (ibid.).

Contrasting factors were found to influence participants in relation to home improvement; some willingly started a project finding DIY activity creative, others reluctantly accepted the process as a necessary task. Given individuals can be motivated "because they value an activity or because there is strong external coercion… or [simultaneously] having internal motivation … [and] being externally pressured" (R. Ryan & Deci, 2000, p. 69), the threads *having, doing* and *context* can be seen twining together in the developing dreamscape.

Sahlins' *spectrum of reciprocity,* introduced in section 3.5, provided a framework with which to locate internal and external forces on participants, from family unit characteristics to the power relations between members of a community. As highlighted through comparison with precedent studies, home allows inhabitants to create and defend their territory, both in physical and social terms, and also through class-consciousness:

> Occupational class has important consequences for the material conditions of people's lives – their 'economic lifestyle'. One aspect of economic lifestyle is class self-image. (Najman & Western, 2000, p. 230)

Participants mostly defined their socio-economic territory as middle class, a perception which influences their behaviour, both oriented to work, income and

material lifestyle, and also towards leisure pursuits (Graetz & McAllister, 1994). This territory, the household, when seen as a complex unit of organisation, embroiled in a daily battle with social, economic, cultural, work and leisure interests and obligations, has to date escaped deeper investigation by design professionals.[285] Exploring situated interpretations of lifestyle as a dreamscape creates new avenues for working with everyday realities of consumer culture, the push and pull of internal motivation and external influence, and develop pro-environmental behaviours (Hargreaves, 2011).

The survey has already delivered new insights on individual perceptions of lifestyle and current domestic environments, highlighting opposing impressions of an ideal home delivered through the media. An approach to home renovation that sees the construction of a better lifestyle as complementary with current ways of living, rather than a commoditised addition to day-to-day life, may help design professionals deliver more convincing places for people to re-cycle and re-make as home, and redress value-oriented consumption problems (T. Williams & Macken, 2012). Currently, however, home ownership remains a dominant middle class expectation, the Great—and yet unsustainable—Australian Dream (Bourke, 2012).

4.5 Doing

Having previously determined that home renovation on a DIY basis has potential to be both a creative and transformative, data collection explored the type(s) of activity participants engaged in and interpreted as DIY. This section explores the thread *doing* through participant data to determine:

> (i) why people choose to undertake home improvement work themselves rather than engage others,
> (ii) how DIY activity impacts ways of living in the home, both current and future),

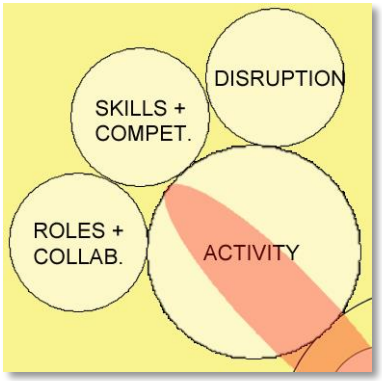
[285] Although design research has started to address complexity, professional disciplines remain focused on narrower fields of practice; refer section 1.2.

(iii) how perceived levels of competence and skill influence DIY projects including levels of creativity, and

(iv) whether practitioners of DIY, when considered an amateur building practice, take on similar roles to those typically found with commercial/professional build projects.

Participants reveal insights on the nature of DIY skills acquired from completing previous tasks, and from others, the division of labour with DIY projects, and the reasons for taking a DIY approach to home improvement work over and above any economic motivation (section 3.5).

Activity



Types of domestic leisure activity

Participants were more easily able to distinguish between types of activity—DIY or R&M—than between who did what. The division of labour was often unclear, especially with couples who were both involved in a DIY project, or where participants claimed to have renovated when further discussion revealed that much of the work was done by others.

Survey responses showed participants were able to divide their home-based leisure activities as either DIY home improvement work or routine R&M work (Figure 4.28). The broad range of domestic leisure activities illustrated the competition for participant's leisure time, some prioritising maintenance of existing fabric over improvement. Many of the hire-renovators cited lack of spare time and/or

expertise as a reason for engaging others, chiefly building contractors, to undertake entire renovations or complete partially finished projects, in this and the PAHR survey. This was considered the most time efficient route to the desired goal, but for other participants it was the activity rather than the outcome that was the most important aspect of engaging with DIY.

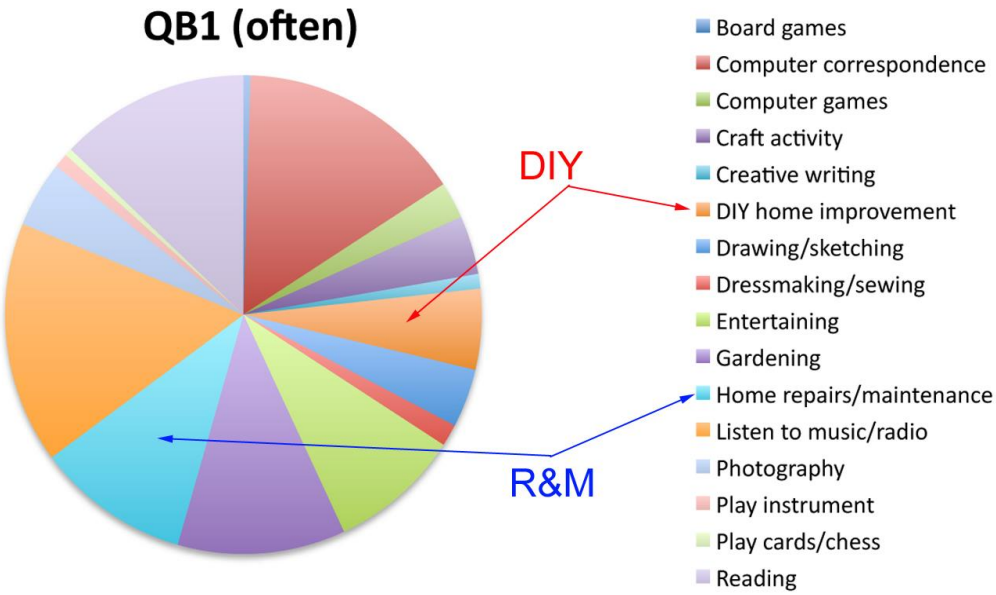


Figure 4.28: Domestic leisure activities (often)

The reasons given when asked who usually does the decorating, included the level or skill/experience of the individual(s), clearly indicating that competence was a factor in the roles people played in actively working on the home. Skill and experience emerged repeatedly in this and in precedent studies as reasons for taking a DIY approach or alternatively hiring a contractor to undertake work. Likewise, skill, expertise and experience featured heavily in the samples of media provided by participants in relation to DIY activities and projects, both explicitly and by implication, refer section 3.3.

DIY activity + experience

As outlined in section 2.3B, participants self-assessed the frequency of their DIY activity against twelve typical home renovation projects, ranging in complexity from a simple task not requiring DIY skills such as moving furniture to a difficult project such as a kitchen renovation (Figure 4.29). A calculation matrix was designed based on the projects assigning a numeric value to DIY experience. The matrix allowed for skill level and frequency using multipliers[286] relating to the how often the project has been undertaken, assuming a steep learning curve on the first job of its kind, such as tiling, with subsequent tiling jobs becoming easier. A key component of *expertise* missing from the variables, according to Jasper and Paperbark consulted in developing the matrix, , was the quality of the final outcome, something not observable or assessable when obtaining data survey and desktop media analysis.

Resulting levels of competence derived from the DIY background matrix score were keyed to the Dreyfus five stage model of skill acquisition, with stages of skill development recognised from ranging from novice to expert (1980)(Figure 4.30). Discussions with the two participant collaborators on DIY skills and Dreyfus' characteristics highlighted the first four levels as most appropriate for participants in this study. These levels are discussed in more detail in section 4.5.

All participants indicated having had past experience with decorating and/or building, yet successive projects presented new challenges to their expectations and capabilities. Of the case study participants, architect Fleetwood had the clearest vision of the outcome, having completed a detail design, but had taken on the most physical work to do and often felt overwhelmed.

[286] Variables considered in the ranking included the number of individual tasks, the number of different tools and materials required, the level of challenge for planning and organising, the likely scale of space involved, the number of different skills required, likely time taken and number of interfaces with suppliers.

DIY EXPERIENCE MATRIX - steps 1 and 2

(development of DIY matrix and categories of DIY task for survey C7)

1. Survey questions for C7 developed in conjunction with participants Jasper (P003b) and Paperbark (P026b). Key DIY tasks identified and assessed for relative complexity based on participant experience. Aspects contributing to each task including skill, effort and use of tools or techniques.

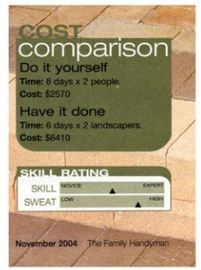
Refer Appendix 6E

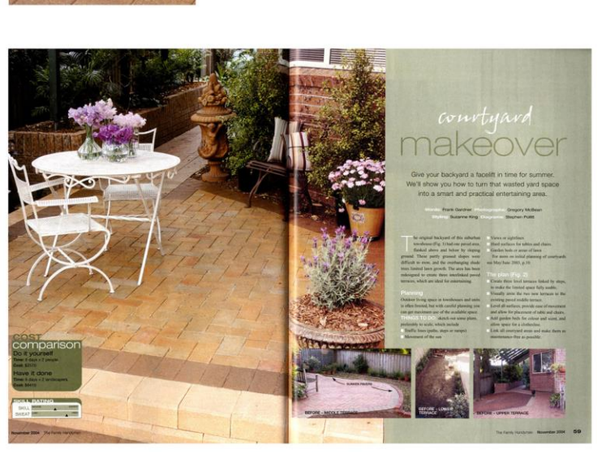
DIY experience - comparison matrix

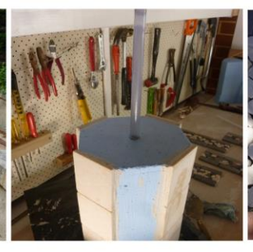
	Survey		Handyman Magazine 2004-6 (project features)							Notes	Case Study projects
DIY Tasks	DIY skill factor/15	equiv. factor/10	Skill*/10	Sweat**/10	DIY Time (days)	DIY Cost ($)	By others Time (days)	By others Cost ($)	Scan Ref	* 1 = novice, 10 = expert ** 1 = low, 10 = high	Note: Case study projects later identified in comparison with the DIY skill factor levels established for this matrix.
Re-arranged your furniture	**1**	0.7									
Assembled IKEA furniture	**2**	1.4									
Putting up shelves	**4**	2.7									
Making/putting up curtains/blinds	**4**	2.7									
Window pelmets			5	3	4hrs	72	2hrs	170	I		
Shelves			2.7	3.5	2	565	1	900	M		
Tuff shelves			2.6	2.7	1	120	4hrs	300	N		
Decorating (painting/wallpaper)	**5**	3.4									Painting with minimal preparation - all participants
Recovering furniture	**5**	3.4									
Make tree bench			1.8	1.8	1.5	189	1	590	F		
Recycle seat			2.3	3.1	1	208	4hrs	445	G		
Laying area of paving (outdoor)	**5**	3.4									
Concrete driveway			6.5	6	5*	2440	2.5**	4,200	C	*days x 3 people, **days x 4 people	
Paving			4.8	5.1	5*	4215	3*	6,615	K	*days x 3 people	Zen garden project, with reticulation - Lotus
Cobblestone path			2.6	5.6	3*	1173	2*	2,400	O	*days x 2 people	
Concrete steps			5	6	2.5*	369	1.5*	1,329	P	*days x 2 people	Limestone steps - Jasper
Tree surround			2	5	1.5*	354	1*	850	U	*days x 2 people	
Concrete pavers			5	7.5	6*	4480	4*	8,475	P	*days x 3 people	Paving areas - Jasper
Hanging doors/fitted handles/locks	**6**	4									
Install French Doors			5	2.2	3.5*	2950	2.5*	4,550	B	*days x 2 people	
Handing a door			6.5	1.8	1	838	4hrs	1,038	J		Doors, doorways - Jasper, Fleetwood
Arboured gate			5	3	2	483	1	805	S		
Tiling walls and/or floors (indoor)	**8**	5.4									Tiling - Jasper
Stone bath surround			6	5					D	(no detail on cost/time)	
Laying mosaic tiles			6	2.8	4	472	2	1300	H		
Building garden walls (outdoor)	**8**	5.4									
Build picket fence			5	5	3	939	2	1900	A		
Courtyard makeover			5	7.5	8*	2570	6*	6410	E	*days x 2 people	Courtyard with water feature - Jasper
Lattice fence			2.8	4.6	3	1241	2	2050	L		
Decking			7	8	10*	14980	6*	18400	T	*days x 2 people	Decking and flooring - Fleetwood
Plastering/rendering (indoor/outdoor)	**8**	5.4									
Frontage renovation			7	5	6*	2722	4.5*	5566	V	*days x 2 people	External works - Jasper, Gfleetwood
Brick render benches			4	6	5*	2090	3*	4010	W	*days x 2 people	
Renovated bathroom/kitchen	**12**	8									Internalwet areas - Jasper, Fleetwood

2. DIY tasks assessed in relation to projects presented in the media, chiefly those identified in Paperbark's resource material, including Handyman Magazine, sample below (refer Appendix 11).

HANDYMAN MAGAZINE PROJECTS - SKILL LEVEL
SCAN REF: E







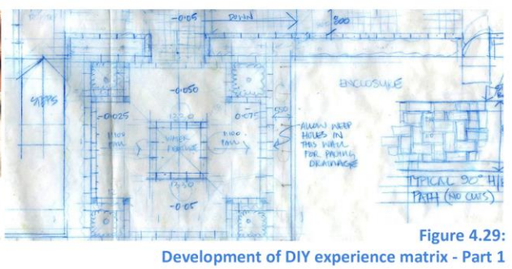


Figure 4.29:
Development of DIY experience matrix - Part 1

DIY EXPERIENCE MATRIX - steps 3, 4 and 5

(process indicated using survey response sample a participant couple)

3. Scan of original survey for Participant couple P030a - female (top) and P030b - male (bottom). (Note variation between responses to questions C8 and C9 suggesting differing interpretations of the question or perception of the activity.)

C7 In the last 10 years, have you done any of the following tasks yourself (not by contractors)?

	Many times	Several times	Once	Never
Re-arranged your furniture	☐	☑	☐	☐
Assembled IKEA furniture	☐	☑	☐	☐
Putting up shelves	☐	☐	☐	☑
Making/putting up curtains/blinds	☐	☑	☐	☐
Decorating (painting/wallpaper)	☐	☑	☐	☐
Recovering furniture	☐	☐	☐	☑
Laying area of paving (outdoor)	☐	☑	☐	☐
Hanging doors/fitting handles/locks	☐	☐	☐	☑
Tiling walls and/or floors (indoor)	☐	☐	☐	☑
Building garden walls (outdoor)	☐	☐	☐	☑
Plastering/rendering (indoor/outdoor)	☐	☐	☐	☑
Renovated bathroom/kitchen	☐	☐	☐	☑

C8 Who usually does the decorating?

☐ You ☐ Your partner ☑ Both you and your partner together
☐ Friend/Family ☐ Tradespeople ☐ Other .....

C9 What are the main reason(s) for who does the decorating? (tick any)

☐ Level of skill/experience ☐ Available time ☐ Available tools/materials
☑ Enjoyment ☑ Economic/cost ☐ Other .....

C7 In the last 10 years, have you done any of the following tasks yourself (not by contractors)?

	Many times	Several times	Once	Never
Re-arranged your furniture	☐	☑	☐	☐
Assembled IKEA furniture	☐	☐	☐	☑
Putting up shelves	☐	☑	☐	☐
Making/putting up curtains/blinds	☐	☑	☐	☐
Decorating (painting/wallpaper)	☐	☑	☐	☐
Recovering furniture	☐	☐	☑	☐
Laying area of paving (outdoor)	☐	☑	☐	☐
Hanging doors/fitting handles/locks	☐	☑	☐	☐
Tiling walls and/or floors (indoor)	☐	☑	☐	☐
Building garden walls (outdoor)	☐	☐	☐	☑
Plastering/rendering (indoor/outdoor)	☐	☐	☐	☑
Renovated bathroom/kitchen	☐	☐	☐	☑

C8 Who usually does the decorating?

☐ You ☑ Your partner ☐ Both you and your partner together
☐ Friend/Family ☑ Tradespeople ☐ Other .....

C9 What are the main reason(s) for who does the decorating? (tick any)

☑ Level of skill/experience ☐ Available time ☐ Available tools/materials
☐ Enjoyment ☐ Economic/cost ☐ Other .....

4. Survey responses applied to matrix designed around the relative complexity and skill(s) required to complete the task. Participant P30a (Orchid) scored 34, and her husband, participant P030b (Portico) scored 71.

Survey Response Analysis Question C7

DIY experience - calculation matrix

DIY Tasks	skill factor	frequency: Many times	Several times	Once	Never
		3	2	1	0
Re-arranged your furniture	1		2		
Assembled IKEA furniture	2		4		
Putting up shelves	4				0
Making/putting up curtains/blinds	4		8		
Decorating (painting/wallpaper)	5		10		
Recovering furniture	5				0
Laying area of paving (outdoor)	5		10		
Hanging doors/fitted handles/locks	6				0
Tiling walls and/or floors (indoor)	8				0
Building garden walls (outdoor)	8				0
Plastering/rendering (indoor/outdoor)	8				0
Renovated bathroom/kitchen	12				0
Participant: P 030a	Score:	0	34	0	0
	Total:	34			

DIY Tasks	skill factor	Many times	Several times	Once	Never
		3	2	1	0
Re-arranged your furniture	1		2		
Assembled IKEA furniture	2				0
Putting up shelves	4		8		
Making/putting up curtains/blinds	4		8		
Decorating (painting/wallpaper)	5		10		
Recovering furniture	5			5	
Laying area of paving (outdoor)	5		10		
Hanging doors/fitted handles/locks	6		12		
Tiling walls and/or floors (indoor)	8		16		
Building garden walls (outdoor)	8				0
Plastering/rendering (indoor/outdoor)	8				0
Renovated bathroom/kitchen	12				0
Participant: P 030b	Score:	0	66	5	0
	Total:	71			

5. Once all survey responses were processed (in Nvivo) and through the matrix, four broad categories of competence were identified. A number of spreadsheets compared competence with the various attributes, below is a preliminary exercise with attribute 'age group'.

Participant Total scores on DIY skill levels Rev A

Participant	Gender	Age Group	Median Age	Total Score	Competence		Ave.age
006a	F	18-29	23.5	0	little or no		F: 3
031a	F	50-59	54.5	2	experience		*132.50*
014a	F	50-59	54.5	12		3no.	44.16
020a	F	50-59	54.5	4	plus 10		
023a	F	70+	74.5	15	some basic		
001a	F	70+	74.5	16	experience		
012a	F	50-59	54.5	18			
011a	F	50-59	54.5	19			M: 2
024a	F	40-49	44.5	20			F: 11
010a	F	60-69	64.5	26			
018a	F	60-69	64.5	26			
015b	M	18-29	23.5	28			
017a	F	40-49	44.5	28			
032a	F	60-69	64.5	30			*717.50*
024b	M	40-49	44.5	31		13 no.	55.19
030a	F	50-59	54.5	34			
010b	M	60-69	64.5	40	basic to		
008a	F	50-59	54.5	42	moderate		
022a	F	40-49	44.5	44	experience		
020b	M	50-59	54.5	51			
021b	M	18-29	23.5	51			M: 6
019a	F	40-49	44.5	58			F: 6
029b	M	60-69	64.5	67			
002a	F	40-49	44.5	68			
030b	M	60-69	64.5	71			
004b	M	40-49	44.5	72			
005a	F	18-29	23.5	94	assisting		602.00
013a	F	70+	74.5	98	assisting	12no.	50.16
002b	M	40-49	44.5	77	moderate to		
012b	M	50-59	54.5	78	substantial		
033b	M	40-49	44.5	85	experience		
007b	M	40-49	44.5	86			
013b	M	70+	74.5	105			
016b	M	70+	74.5	115			M: 12
025b	M	40-49	44.5	121			F: 1
011b	M	50-59	54.5	124			
027b	M	50-59	54.5	129			
026b	M	50-59	54.5	138			
003b	M	30-39	34.5	151			
009a	F	40-49	44.5	163			*678.50*
028b	M	50-59	54.5	168		13no.	52.19
					total:	41 no.	
			2130.5				
		ave. age:	51.2				

Adding age groups: Used middle age to calculate averages, not much variation
Anomolies may impact, such as 005a - without this, experienced ave = 52.19
does this support the AA report about younger people? Only surveys sml group.

Figure 4.30:
Development of DIY experience matrix - Part 2

Lotus was also overwhelmed, but this time from the very beginning. With little DIY experience and no design skills, she did not know where to begin planning her project.

Pro and am practices

It is the most efficient and effective *way* of working with information, tools and materials that most often marks the difference between the amateur and professional, and frequently the most noticeable gap between the way DIYers undertake projects, and the way contractors or tradesmen complete the work:

> In 'the building game', learning to identify the 'easy way' from the 'hard ways' takes time. It is learned experientially by watching others and doing oneself. Learning to read a building site involves being able to quickly identify the 'easy way' of performing a job and to set the work out accordingly. (Moore, 1991, p. 181)

The *easy way* for most tradesmen relates to minimising effort and time through ensuring supplies are delivered to the closest access point, avoiding double handling of materials,[287] and programming deliveries and preparation work so there are no delays to the works. Fleetwood learned to *read* a building site from working as a labourer and through supervising client projects; similarly Jasper worked with contractors while at university and later with others (Figure 4.44), as well as watching tradesmen visiting the house. On occasion Jasper or Fleetwood, as well as less experienced participants, admitted to doing things the *hard way*, a situation brought about by incorrect scheduling, multitasking and lack of preparation. According to Moore, a valuable member of a contracting team is aware of the whole job rather than focusing on single/individual tasks; always mindful of what else needs doing on site to maintain the overall pace, delegating tasks to others as required (1991).

Delegation can also occur within the frame of DIY work, most often when couples work together on a *do it ourselves* basis rather than when someone works alone.[288]

[287] Later in this section, Jasper identifies multiple handling as the *rubik cube effect.* Figure 4.37.
[288] As previously mentioned, DIY is most often a DIW/*do it with others* practice (Vannini & Taggart, 2013a) refer section 3.5.

In the case study, most delegation occasions were recorded for Jasper, nearly always working on projects with his partner, Pollywaffle, who was "always given the fiddly tasks", and provided assistance when Jasper required "extra hands". He also called on his partner to work out measurements and layouts, such as marking up tiles and blocks for him to cut, making templates to check awkward junctions, calculating unit layouts and working out patterns in paving or tiles. Lotus trusted others with experience, allowing them to delegate tasks *to her*, less comfortable as the one in charge. Giving directions to her teenage grandson, Lotus tried to give him small jobs, observing "he's a bit lazy so he'll come out and I'll say what tiles I want and he will be happy to do it, but I can go on for hours where he can't." Fleetwood was the least able to *trust* someone else to help unless he was sure they had skills that matched or exceeded his.

On a building site each trade is, ideally, equally committed to a project schedule, and there is a clearly defined hierarchy of responsibility and roles. With DIY projects on the other hand, individuals have to determine their own deadlines, and work by bricolage rather than following a series of trades or work orders, and hence often find they are working out of sequence, the *hard way*. Without well-developed building skills, difficulties or challenges in a project compound, the timescale usually blows out and frustration can set in. Even for Fleetwood, *knowing* what to do was not the same as *being able* to do it; as Moore concludes from his study of subcontracting in Perth, it takes time and skill to achieve a bodily praxis that facilitates working the *easy way* (1991).

In differentiating between those who do building work on a regular basis with well-developed skills (pro/professional), such as sub-contractors or *subbies*, from those who are self-funded builders/DIYers with less consistent opportunities for learning and improving their skills (am/amateur) (refer Appendix 9 for comparisons), the different relationship between client and builder is also important. Working on a DIY basis, Fleetwood and Lotus were their own clients *and* builders; thus no need to build trust or develop a relationship based on productivity or interaction. The roles were inseparable. For Jasper, decisions made about what to do and how were also

negotiated with his partner. They became a *client team*, jointly agreeing what they wanted then a *build team* jointly agreeing how and when it would be accomplished.

Dream making – three projects compared

In terms of timescale and intermittent or continual periods of DIY activity, the case study followed three different types of project; a short single project, a long and complex single project, and a series of ongoing smaller projects. Data collection commenced at the beginning of Lotus' garden redesign project and during the final two years of Fleetwood's complete house renovation. Jasper's home improvement work had been sporadic and ongoing for the five years prior to the case study, so the research recorded separate smaller projects arising during the period of observation, approximately late 2009 to mid 2012 (Figure 4.31).[289]

Figure 4.31: Jasper using tools, materials and body to engage with DIY activity

Site visits provided opportunities to review and document progress, if any, observe signs of DIY activity in areas other than the project site such as tool creep,[290] and discuss current challenges. Monopolising discussions on a regular basis were issues touching on meaning and inspiration (Lotus), practicalities of living in a building site (Fleetwood), and ideas and day-to-day planning (Jasper), and as such extended over several months.

Although Lotus has interpreted working on her garden as *useful* leisure activity, Fleetwood felt pressure to ensure his time was *constantly productive*; this

[289] Ethnographic tools including project sketch and video diaries, mood charts, movement trace maps, photographic journals focused on the participatory design and build experience.
[290] Tools not replaced after use *crept* to other locations, sometimes temporarily, sometimes indefinitely, for example, *finding their way* into kitchen drawers refer Figure 4.21.

dichotomy in perception has been attributed to the specific cultural context rather than wider, universally held labels (Hammell, 2004; Primeau, 1996). Following the longitudinal course of these projects it was clear this perception was also under constant renegotiation. Participants had different feelings about the workload at different times; Fleetwood's feelings about DIY changed depending upon the influence of others, pressure of other activities on his time, short and long-term goals, the type of work, levels of general stress and overall mood. Leisure time, a much valued and finite resource, came under increasing pressure, as predicted deadlines were not met.

Projects varied in perceived *complexity*, depending on the number of tasks or steps from preparation to finishing, the level of skill(s) needed to accomplish the work, the *workability* of materials,[291] the number and sophistication of tools required, the timescale involved, the number of people or amount of specialised input required. Subjectively assessed, complexity varies depending upon the skill and experience of each person tackling the task. Participants with *substantial* DIY backgrounds might have acknowledged a project as complex; however, they may not have considered it *difficult* if they already had the tools, skills and knowledge to tackle the work.

Taking into account the comparison matrix based on survey questions and participant resource material, the painting projects or tasks identified would be considered fairly minimal in terms of skill and *sweat* or effort required (Figure 4.29). However, as evidenced by narratives and photographs supplied by numerous participants, there is enormous variation in the work required to complete painting projects and it becomes clear that generalisations such as those provided by magazines are far from useful guides for people to follow, refer Appendix 7.

It is not possible, feasible or even desirable to conclude that a broad assessment can be made of DIY projects on a scale of difficulty or effort as indicated in

[291] For example, timber is considered an easy material as it can be worked using hand tools, however working metal requires specific methods of handling, tools or equipment such as a forge or furnace.

publications such as the Handyman Magazine.[292] Projects may consist of comparable individual tasks, such as sanding floorboards or fitting handles, but in totality, projects are shaped by site specificity and *internally differentiated* by the people involved in the practice, both directly and indirectly (Warde, 2005). Such differentiation encompasses individual or collaborative skills and experience, specific tools and equipment applied to the tasks, and individual methods of practice and timescales.

For participants with *substantial* DIY experience, the Zen garden project planned by Lotus would be a straightforward small-scale project, completed over several weekends. In reality the garden makeover took Lotus at least twelve months from planning to substantial but not total completion. Comparing full house and garden renovation projects on houses of a similar construction and typology, Jasper and Pollywaffle completed their previous house in Queensland in under two years whereas Fleetwood estimated it would have taken him over eight years by the time he has finished. As the first total renovation project for the couple as well as Fleetwood, the learning curve was equally steep, however, as an architect Fleetwood was more familiar with the engineering requirements of structural modification, yet Jasper could share the workload and decision-making.

Case study projects have been graphically mapped as part of the study (section 4.7), locating issues outlined in this section against the evolution of the project. The timelines identify individual or collaborative input rather than separate tasks through items of work and/or technique. This process turned the focus on people as capable practitioners, active agents in the shaping of their homes and domestic lifestyles through their design and DIY practices and the roles they take on.

Doing generates dreams of making

In DIY as for commercial build work, assessing the best course of action to achieve the best outcome requires knowledge and an experienced eye. In one project,

[292] A magazine containing broadly categorised DIY projects and home renovation oriented projects, refer Appendix 7.

Jasper relied on Paperbark's judgement when weighing up the inconvenience, cost and work involved with ripping out the existing ceiling and putting up new plasterboard and cornice or patching the old ceiling (Figure 4.32).

Figure 4.32: Paperbark and Jasper collaborating to make design and build decisions

Ultimately they decided the additional work required to replace the ceiling would result in a finish of a much higher standard than even the best remediation work. When it came to the bedrooms, Jasper decided the sagging ceilings could be repaired to an acceptable standard without the need for total replacement, even though new ceilings would be the "ideal solution". Jasper was able to make this decision based on the experience gained working with Paperbark, and through an increasing awareness of his own skills and competence. This indicates that judgement about what is *ideal* and what is *doable*, acceptable or sufficient for the purpose is subject to change.[293]

Unlike the two men in the case study, Lotus did not place herself under pressure to build with the same level of sophistication; she anticipated the Zen garden would be

[293] For example, as a DIYer gains in competence with materials and experiential knowledge, scaffolding on episodes of *doing*, and analysis or reflection on what was *done*.

a simple space without special detailing or finishes. She was prepared to accept whatever standard that she, and those who helped her, could manage; happy to recycle and reuse, admitting there were aspects of her own handiwork that were "rough as all get out". Lotus was not concerned whether the garden impressed people at the *opening party*, although the approval of family and friends was important to her, but that the garden was ready in time. It was important the work did not take too long or cost too much, but still provide her with an attractive space to enjoy and entertain.

Although the participants' home environment changed as they applied their skills and effort, the participants themselves also changed, as did their expectations of what was feasible and what was acceptable, to themselves and to others. Once Jasper became more realistic about his skills and expectations, he began to enjoy the activity more and in the current house had been doing DIY almost continually. For Fleetwood, however, had a love-hate relationship with renovation, sometimes stealing social time to mix with others, or seek solitude from a week of dealing with clients or people at his office:

QUOTE PARTICIPANT CONVERSATIONS

Fleetwood: It [DIY] takes your mind off all your other shit as well. Its like fishing, if you focus on catching that fish, or if you are focused on getting the line of nails in, it kind of takes your mind off all the other crap, the bills you've got to pay, and all the rest of that shit... I find that the days that I have that were really good was when I was most relaxed, and the amount of work I could get done in a day if I was chilled out but it is very difficult to maintain that state of mind when you are living in the shit, you know there's tools everywhere and you've got to get up and do it all again.

Even though Fleetwood became very unhappy during the eight years of renovation, he also commented on the value of DIY as an escape from the routine of everyday life. Lotus also reported enjoying practical activity as a way to allow her mind to decompress, letting her thoughts run when life was "all too busy". Lotus found the prospect of getting outside and working on the garden was enough to improve her state of mind, and realised it had started to become a new routine or ritual she

looked forward to. Having created a Zen space, as DIYer *and* hire-renovator, and celebrated the accomplishment, Lotus was able to visualise more projects she could tackle.

Creating through doing

For Lotus in particular, working *on* the house or garden took on an almost spiritual significance. Lotus found a sense of contentment in *doing*; the creative and practical nature of DIY provided a sense of achievement and control, especially at a time when she felt most stressed:

QUOTE PARTICIPANT CONVERSATIONS

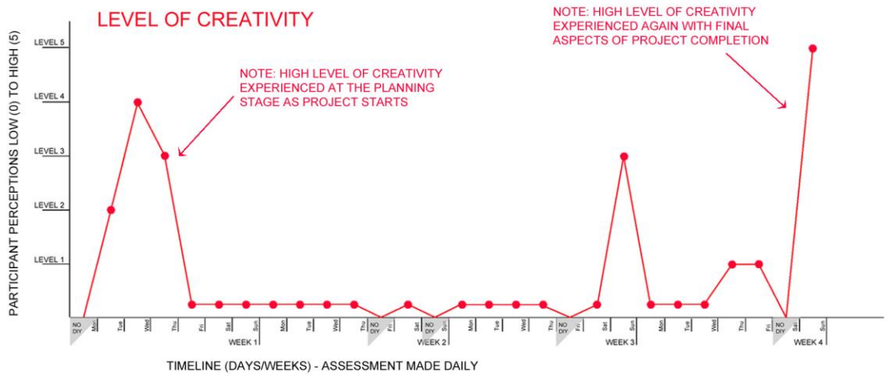
Pollywaffle: Why are you going to do most of the work yourself?
Lotus: The joy of creating something that I really want my self. For me it is joy and pleasure, and passion... I work through my grief or my emotions with my hands, yes, like when my sister died, she died when I was cycling round China and I came back and I made a wall hanging that was about China but everything that I worked through was dealing with the grief... I love working with my hands.
Pollywaffle: So DIY hasn't been a chore?
Lotus: No, I have always loved doing things. If I didn't have a creative project going I would get depressed at home. I had to, to me it was an outlet for something that, I don't know, whether it was part of me, or... I did have to have that outlet... I'd made the children's clothes, you know,

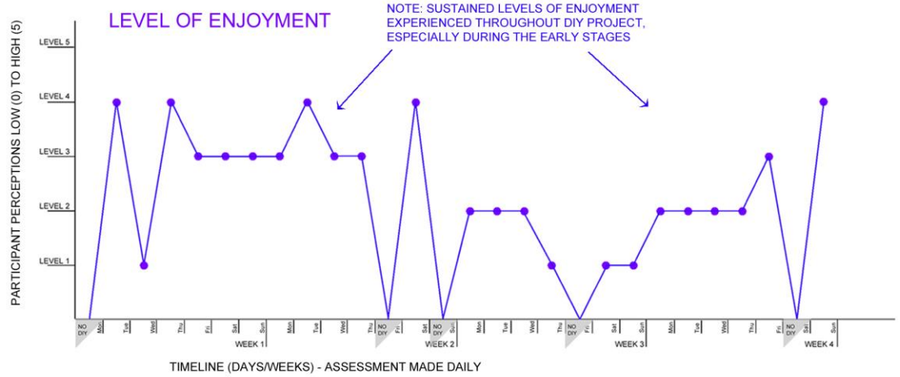
For Lotus, whether poetry or children's clothes, DIY or craftwork, *doing* and *creating* were inseparable, and integral to her sense of well-being. DIY tasks that fall within an individual's competence and yet still challenged them had the potential to induce a state of *flow* as defined by Csikzentmihalyi (section 3.5). Unlike Lotus, Jasper did not verbalise the way he became immersed in DIY activity, but when asked to track different aspects of his day over four weeks, there were days when he was so engrossed he forgot to complete the study journal until reminded.

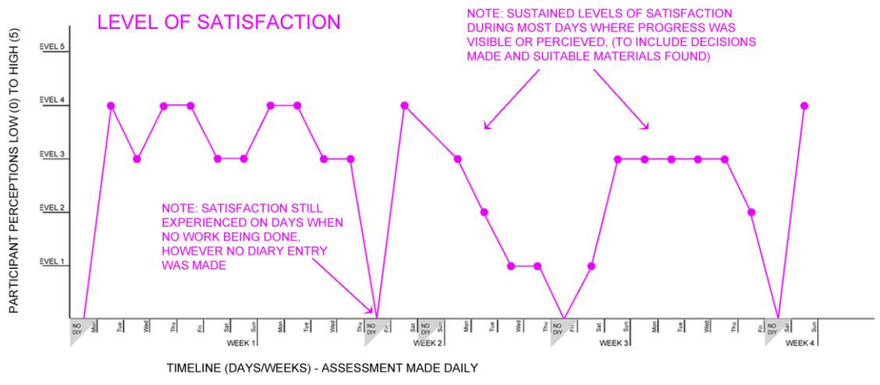
Jasper's journal records perceived levels creativity, enjoyment and satisfaction as well as the frustration, fatigue and difficulty experienced while working on a short project in his garage (Figure 4.33); a workshop down one side using both recycled

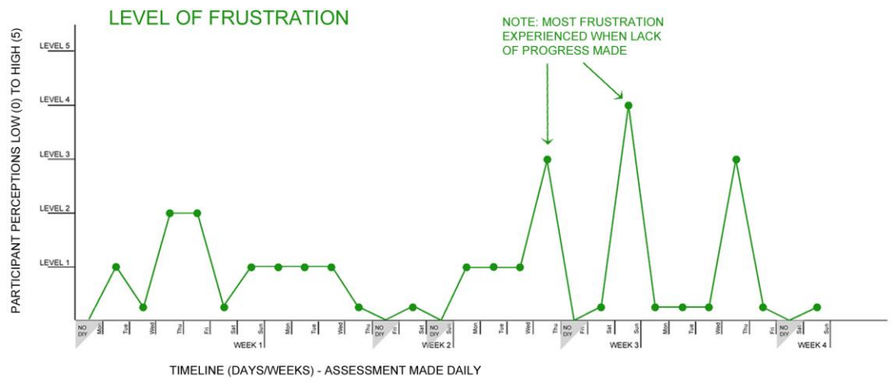
DAILY JOURNAL (CULTURAL PROBE):
CHARTS OF DIY PRACTITIONER PERCEPTIONS
(Levels resulting from extracts of participant P003bJasper's journal over 1 month - Jan 28th to Feb 14th, 2010)

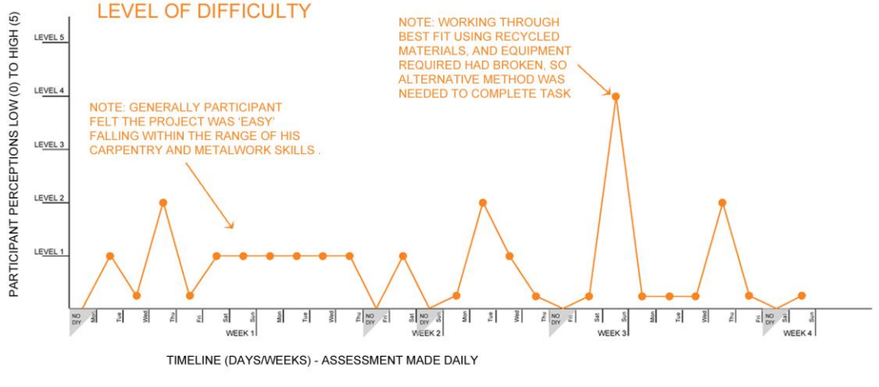
NOTE: TO SEE THE SIX LEVELS PLOTTED AS OVERLAYS ON ONE GRAPH, REFER COMPOSITE CHART FIGURE 4.34











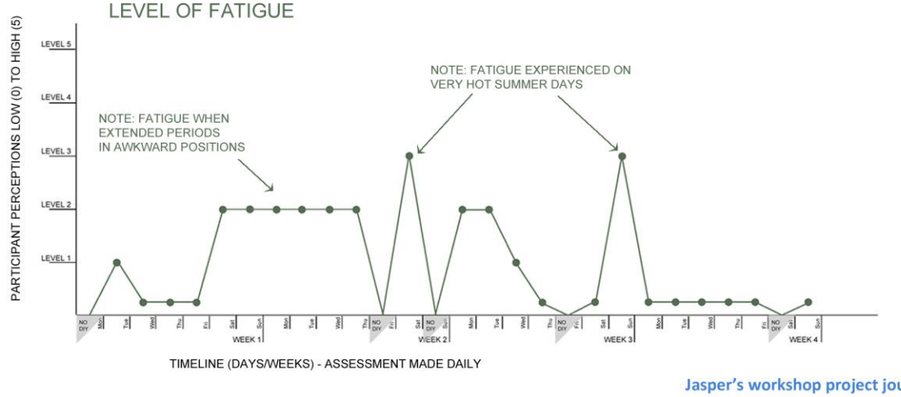


Figure 4.33:
Jasper's workshop project journal - perceptions

and new materials. Building on the connection between creativity and *doing* made by Lotus, the same might be anticipated for Jasper; expecting days when he experienced greater levels of creativity, he would also record high levels of satisfaction and enjoyment, especially as a design professional.

When the journal was charted, levels of enjoyment and satisfaction were closely linked, but were not necessarily reflective of creativity levels. A number of peaks and troughs occurred in the levels of fatigue and frustration over the twenty-eight day period, including the discomfort of labouring during very hot summer days and when equipment such as an electric sander broke in the middle of a task. However, overall this had no adverse impact on the sense of achievement experienced at the end of the period (Figure 4.34).

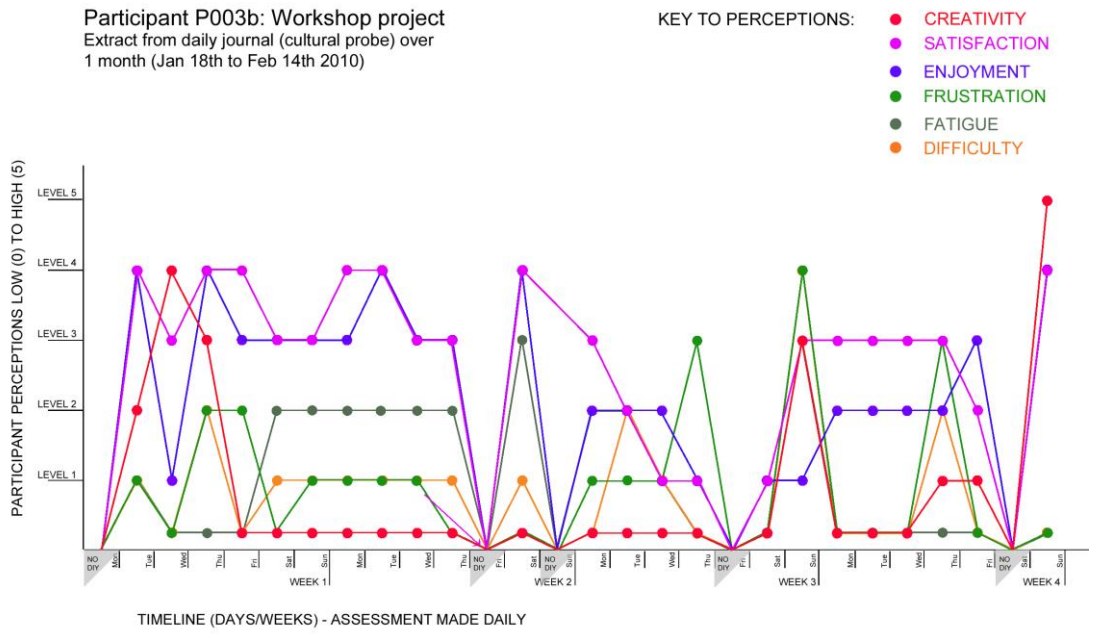


Figure 4.34: Jasper's workshop project journal - composite chart

Given the combination of factors in the charting exercise, a trained designer may interpret creativity in a different way to a non-designer, and a project or task may poses sufficient challenge in itself for Jasper to give it creative merit:[294]

[294] In other words, that a creative activity does not necessarily require an obvious design element.

> The best moments in our lives … usually occur if a person's body or mind is stretched to its limits in a voluntary effort to accomplish something difficult and worthwhile. Such experiences are not necessarily pleasant when they occur. (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990, pp. 3-4)

When observing the physicality of building work, and more aptly when experiencing it first hand as a *player*, the act of *doing* reveals that body and mind are often engaged without conscious consideration of the effort involved. With an experienced builder, adjustments to optimise the body position are more sub-conscious and immediate than for an amateur, experience also brings more accurate hand to eye co-ordination and more appropriate measures of force applied to tools or materials. With an amateur builder such as many who undertake DIY, and especially where the work is sporadic—tasks may be separated by months or years, there is often a need to explore and learn techniques through trial and error, or re-learn skills acquired in the past but since forgotten through lack of practice. Although levels of satisfaction and accomplishment may vary for those whose skills are unable to *realise* their ideas, the capacity for creativity and to experience *flow* is available to both experienced and amateur practitioner alike.

Disruption, skills and roles

Skills and competence

Where survey responses for Lotus and Jasper indicate that choosing to undertake DIY is based on enjoyment,[295] Fleetwood highlighted *skill* as a key motivation for him. On occasion Fleetwood admitted enjoying the activity, aware of greater productivity on days when he felt more relaxed, perhaps in a state of *flow*. However, a threshold of tolerance linked time and inconvenience for each task/project, beyond which the work became a chore and participants experienced negative feelings. Having said that, a large number of participants reported a sense of satisfaction when entire jobs, or even individual tasks were completed, providing the motivation to continue, or to start new projects was within their capability (experience/knowledge), competence (skill/ability), and capacity (resources). From

[295] DIY here falls within factors making up life choice refer section 3.2.

detailed descriptions of DIY histories during interviews, the more relevant the skills and experience, the quicker the job or task was completed and with the minimum of trial and error. This in turn appeared to generate a greater sense of personal confidence; reduce anxiety associated with feeling overwhelmed, and provided opportunity for enjoyment.

Building a workshop in the garage, Jasper juggled resources, skill(s), time allocation, the materials he had *to hand* and his notional budget for new materials, feeling compromised between an *ideal* scenario and what would be sufficient for the purpose. Ideally, he would have started from scratch, designing the entire fit-out, buying specific materials and installing "everything square and plumb", however, he also wanted to use up materials he "had around", and so he started with what he had *on stock* and let the project evolve over several weeks:

QUOTE PARTICIPANT CONVERSATIONS

Fleetwood: I helped decorate for other people, but this is the first DIY project I've done – most here, but it's not rocket science is it (laughs)... Most is just common sense, I think if you've got that sort of logic it is just who you are, and I design the same way.
Pollywaffle: What practical skills did you have to start with?
Fleetwood: Nothing. I didn't know electrical, but with this stuff, I've been drawing it for years. I've worked on building sites though, but that was just digging holes and clearing up, sweeping up, but you see it.
Pollywaffle: What specific skills did you need to learn?
Fleetwood: Electrical, plumbing. I have a friend who's done a bit of both before, so learned some from him.

Where skill specifically relates to the ability, dexterity, proficiency and expertise evidenced in a "trained practice" (Sennett, 2008, p. 37), competence, capability and capacity, are often used as interchangeable terms relating to more generic applications of *doing*; being able to or in a position to *do something*, to act.[296] This lack of specificity regarding terminology has an impact on the perception of value in

[296] Sennett in fact differentiates ability from capability, indicating that ability can be acquired, but capability is something "activated or repressed by culture… built into the structure of human hand bones" (2008, p. 276).

relation to the work of others, whether contractors or DIYers.[297] Frequently Fleetwood used the word *competence* in relation to contractors, having observed, "even migrant workers do a better job" than local builders:[298]

QUOTE PARTICIPANT CONVERSATIONS

Fleetwood: I don't know whether it's an Australian thing or whether it's a modern day thing ... the quality of building work over there [UK] seems to be up there, but I think they've got a history of craftsmen. Over here people just say – 'oh, I'll give it a go', and before they know it they've got a truck with 'I'm a builder' written on the side and everyone believes it... I think the standard here is poor. I don't think you have the English craftsman, some of the Italians can do it ... they're hard workers. Steve had some Chinese people doing his tiling at a cheap rate and they were brilliant, really good.

To Fleetwood traditional levels of skill and competence of tradesmen had been "lost in Australia". His admiration for craftsmen like his father verged on nostalgia for the artistry and precision of a previous era of building in the UK, skills no longer practiced or appreciated. Fleetwood was critical of mass manufactured products, furniture and even ideas promoted to the public; media selling mass-produced dreams.

To Lotus knowing the artist or craftsman is integral to appreciating the finished artefact, appreciating "the philosophy behind the making and the process … the process is absolutely part of the final piece". Although the making and maker are integral to the appreciation of art and bespoke furniture, they are rarely considered at the center of home renovation.[299] Current demands on the building industry has seen mass manufacturing principles applied even to trades, where, according to

[297] The distinction between *pro* and *am* has connotations about how well someone is able to accomplish a task.
[298] The lack of specificity in Fleetwood's comment leads to an over-generalisation about the multitude of different tasks that are found in the building industry, together with the specific skill, knowledge and experience that is required to attempt each task.
[299] Suzie Attiwill differentiates between an appreciation of the outcome and of the *process* by which things are made by hand in relation to textile craft, the former representing time, the latter as actualized time (2005). The same can be said for making things by hand in DIY, those who *experience the process* have an appreciation of time beyond the representation of a period spent 'on the tools'.

Fleetwood, “even if you are paying top dollar I don’t think you still guarantee good workmen”.

Fleetwood’s assessment of skill and competence related equally to his professional work as an architect and to his own DIY. To Fleetwood the house renovation was an *owner-builder* project rather than a self-build DIY project with all the connotations of amateur workmanship and low skill level. Even though he acknowledged this was the first time he had tackled many of the tasks himself, Fleetwood was convinced his workmanship was/would be better than local tradesmen, even though specific skills were unpractised, undeveloped. Fleetwood’s confidence in his own ability was much greater than other participants; it was part of his identity (section 4.2).

Jasper, on the other hand, built his confidence through scaffolding tasks on previous projects, preferring *hands on* experience to achieve the level of skill he felt necessary to tackle further work. In developing skills and building knowledge, both Jasper and Fleetwood accepted advice and guidance from friends, noting, in the survey that the quality both valued most in friends was honest and reliable. These two qualities have also been cited in relation to hiring tradesmen, Jasper and Fleetwood having been “let down by tradies” who have not turned up or have tried to overcharge for work.

All participants in the case study have taken on contractors recommended by friends or contacts, indicating the importance of honesty and reliability within their social network and issue of *trusting other* mentioned frequently by Fleetwood. Lotus, for example, describes a garden contractor recommended by a close friend in terms of his *behaviour* as well as workmanship, noting he was a “gorgeous old man … lovely to have in your house”. Emptying the shed of her husband’s things, Lotus needed help sorting through the tools to avoid throwing away “really valuable stuff—I did not have a clue what half the stuff was”, and decided to ask the gardening contractor “who by this time we trusted” to go through everything.

Jasper's practical skill set had accrued incrementally, bottom up, with modest expectations relating to outcome, whereas Fleetwood related to practical skills from a top down approach, expecting to be capable of building exactly to his own design from knowing about construction. Fleetwood assumed he would be able tackle most tasks, much in the way people respond to the DIY ideas on TV makeover programmes or in DIY magazines, considering the process of translating from paper to place reasonably straight forward. Without being realistic about personal limitations, particularly specialised skills, other participants interviewed found projects quickly become overwhelming and the outcome often below standard. Even during the case study, it was clear the tactile nature of handling tools and materials could not be fully understood or learned from watching someone on television, or reading instructions from books or magazines, but only through actual physical practice, learning through doing (Crawford, 2009).

As designers with high expectations of final aesthetics, Jasper and Fleetwood, realised, through attempting finishing trades work, that have they did not have the skill or experience required for a truly *professional finish*. This was especially true of plastering and rendering, where both of the participants started in parts of the building or garden "where no-one would see it", but for visible interior and exterior surfaces acknowledged the value of engaging professionals.

For a number of participants, the skill, speed and attention to detail of finishing trades[300] delivered expertise for which they were willing to pay, mostly for the professional finishes/aesthetic. Fleetwood recognised how slow and mediocre his attempts at rendering were in comparison with friend in England, a professional plasterer; "I know for a fact that I'm anal. Paul, who I was just telling you about, he could have boshed out[301] those walls and they would be *bloody* perfect." This dedication to perfectionism reflected the way he positioned himself as an architect.

[300] To include plastering, glazing, dry walling, tiling, waterproofing, flooring and painting.
[301] 'Similar to 'bash out'—to produce something quickly.

Roles + collaboration

Interviews revealed key differences between working *with* a client, even sometimes to a partner on a DIY project, and working *as* the client; the repositioning of the role appearing to be less about the scope of work and more about the timelines involved. As a tradesman or contractor responsible for renovating someone's home, the arrangement necessarily requires an agreement on the schedule including the extent of disruption. To all intents and purposes, in the *building game*[302] there are clear divisions of labour and appreciation that "time is money", in the world of DIY, there are fewer divisions and time is often perceived as a *free* and boundless resource.[303]

According to participant and builder Paperbark, builders organise their workplace and work practices around efficiency, "to save time looking for the right tool or piece of hardware, not having to untangling power cables before use". The frustration participants reported about household clutter focused on the "waste of time" looking for things. Fleetwood demonstrated both discipline and lack of discipline in dual practices observed at his home as a building site; as builder he was methodical and organised, cleaning and putting his tools away at the end of the day, but as client, homeowner and resident he was impatient and untidy (Figure 4.35). He may have been modelling his behaviour on builders he knew as friends or through visiting work sites in his job; but it was clearly in contrast to his habitual and disrupted patterns of eating and sleeping.

For Fleetwood, as for other participants, working alone as client *and* DIY builder, the project deadline was an elastic notion based upon available spare time, funds and motivation. After eight years of renovation *elasticity*, Fleetwood finally produced a

[302] Being *a player* (Hayano) in the *building game* (Moore) implies a professional or commercial culture with rules and expected patterns of behaviour. This is not the case in DIY, where the amateur or hobbyist builders make their own rules.

[303] Divisions still exist where work has to be done by licensed trades (electrical, plumbing), and where tasks may require the strength or co-ordination of more than one person, here one becomes the primary builder and the other an assistant, as reflected in survey responses.

schedule for completion, a spreadsheet with day-by-day targets, adopting a project management tool from his working life as an architect to regain control of the deadline. Lotus fully embraced the elasticity in her project, allowing the work to extend longer than anticipated, not wanting to put herself under any pressure in the role of builder. As a client however, she was impatient to entertain in the completed garden. Jasper as builder, in theory answerable his partner as a client as well as himself, also found it difficult to maintain a consistent momentum with the work for most of the small projects he had started.

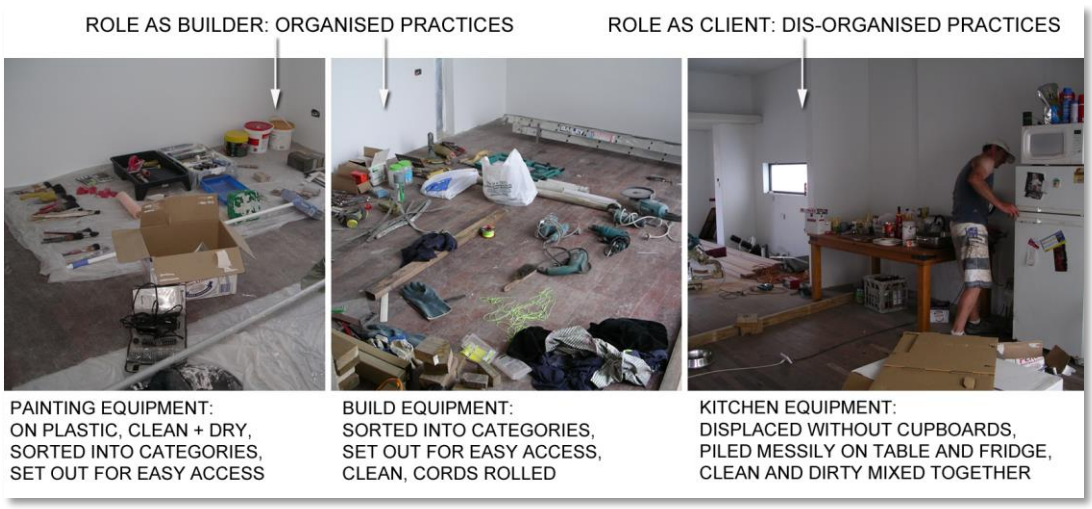


Figure 4.35: Fleetwood living between order and chaos

Participants who worked together on DIY projects, such as Jasper and Pollywaffle, tended to share decision-making during project planning and the less onerous or physically demanding tasks, such as cleaning up mess and shopping. In most cases, without the support or co-operation of all members of the household, the disruptive process of DIY would not be possible. Although most couples indicated that they both did the decorating together in the survey, it was found that *together* did not necessarily equate to equal input (Appendix 2).

The differential division of labour might occur for any number of reasons; physical strength, experience, patience, interest, availability or dexterity, but in all interviews, there were clear signs of collaboration and teamwork. When posting back a completed survey, the wife of one participant, Homespun, and mother of

another, Pandora, enclosed a poem titled "the church of DIY" about her husband's "religion which colours his whole life", positioning herself as:

> A long serving assistant… only an acolyte serving the DIY celebrant. Never having had to learn how to offer symbolic sacrifices for myself, it has been enough or me to serve by fetching, carrying and finding equipment which has, in some inexplicable fashion, strayed from the alter.

For Homespun's wife, the only way to spend time *with* him was to be available to hold things, find things or make tea.[304] The constant negotiation of spare time with other commitments appeared to be the most difficult thing for participants, vacillating between their role as builder and client/homeowner. Lacking the skill and experience required to work in the most time efficient way, participants took on roles that tradesmen do not adopt *at work*. Fleetwood and Jasper automatically took on the designer's role, with Jasper working through different design options for each task, sometimes deliberating for weeks before getting started. Builders, on the other hand, usually respond *to* instructions or directions provided by a client and/or designer, and thus mostly focused on programming, resourcing and supervision of operations.

Given a builder or designer would not *live in* a building site for work for many reasons,[305] it would be reasonable question why DIYers and their families, in collaboration as clients, allow or tolerate such extended periods of upheaval. The lack of experience about the realistic timeframes is partly to blame, according to many participants, together with general acceptance that doing DIY is a journey of self-development. As clients hiring designers/contractors, while the house transformation would have been faster, the opportunity for the process of self-transformation[306] largely denied. Here, clients are effectively consumers of building services; non-DIY renovation thus commoditised and standardised, made

[304] A study on the role of breaks in DIY found that making/drinking/sharing tea gave DIYers a sense of common identity and played very specific roles throughout many practical projects (Marsh, 1998). Refer Section 2.3A (ii).
[305] For example, the disruption to both living and working practices, discussed in the next section.
[306] For example, through adopting other roles, or through bodily engagement with the work.

predictable through commercialization, where "serendipity is denied and the richness of experience is reduced to … crude hits of fun, excitement, novelty or reassurance" (Baggini, 2012).

Serendipity here includes the possibility of meeting a new set of creative and personal challenges through taking on alternative roles, thus potential for unplanned moments of *flow*. Fleetwood and Jasper both said *ideally*[307] they would take on the design role and "get someone else to build", but as the case study demonstrated, in *reality* neither wanted to relinquish the role of builder. Even though Jasper, Fleetwood and even Lotus, under different financial circumstances, might be prepared to pay for work to be done, they actively decide to undertake work on a DIY basis rather than continue to live in the home unchanged.[308]

All case participants chose between actively reconfiguring their home or doing nothing, adjusting their expectations from ideal to real, even where this necessitated a significant amount of their own time and resources. For these participants, making the decision often relied on their *DIY career*, either as apprentices to others with skills or based on experience gained through trial and error (Shove, 2007). Those who are able to develop and maintain DIY careers feel empowered by their actions: "I don't think we change our habits to suit the house, which is what most people must do. We change the house to suit us, so it's constantly evolving. We live it, we don't live in it" (Marcus, 1995, p. 54).

Opting to the work *by themselves*, the self-build journey rewarded nearly every participant, novice or otherwise, with a sense of achievement and accomplishment, and a greater knowledge of construction than before. The DIY *career* exhibited by Jasper and also Paperbark, demonstrated that having acquired skills, tools, materials and competence, individuals were likely to continue doing home

[307] For them an *ideal* situation was partly about having the money to hire contractors as required, and the ability to chose which parts of the job, or roles, to take on.
[308] An example of the point at which someone decides on action/inaction based on interaction of life choice and life chance in the lifestyle paradigm, Figure 3.3.

improvement work in the future, the personal return on investment[309] thus provided the foundation for further cycles of activity. The creative process was found to connect the client's imagination with the builder's ability to fabricate. Many career DIYers in the study ultimately became client-builder hybrid practitioners, some additionally took on the role of design, as discussed in section 4.7.

Domestic disruption

DIY is inherently messy and disruptive; in order to deconstruct and reconstruct a building, things are necessarily out of place, people out of routine. Waves of building work are followed by intervals of *normal* household activity. Trades are motivated to finish a project and move to the next by monetary reward, however, the less professionally a job is organised, the more often there are breaks in the continuum. Households already struggle with the organisation of artefacts that facilitate everyday living, thus DIY imposes another *extra-ordinary* layer of artefacts, materials, tools and work-wear on the inhabitants (Cwerner & Metcalfe, 2003). As Fleetwood and Jasper's projects have illustrated, the relationship between the living and doing practices of an amateur builder reveal much about flexibility in patterns of behaviour, and the ability to create pockets of order within a temporarily disrupted environment.

Although the making and remaking of home is often approached as *a project*, understood in most applications as a singular manageable phase of work, participant accounts illustrate that the extended periods involved are instead interpreted as a *phase* of one's life. In this way, renovation as a project moves away from the contemporary understanding of the word and closer to its Latin origins; *proicere* meaning to throw forth/throw out/abandon and prepared or ready for battle (Cawley, 2012)[310]. As participants describe the enormous commitment that DIY home renovation requires, there is a sense they had to abandon *normal* life and

[309] For example, the sense of satisfaction from both being able to *save* money and *gain* improvement.
[310] Translations and etymology vary depending on source. Some participants referred to DIY as doing *battle*, or *attacking* a project, or feeling *defeated*, refer section 4.2.

battle through, impacting the lives of others in the process. Most participants in this study as in the precedent studies, reported a gap between the *idea* of living through a DIY project and the *reality*, mostly it is more difficult, more disruptive, more time consuming, more inconvenient, more wasteful[311], more costly and more stressful than anticipated.

According to Jasper, home should be your sanctuary *from* the outside world, but negotiating with tradesmen coming into your house as part of a renovation project feels like *doing battle* on your own territory. The intrusive presence of tradesmen in the home is often cited as the reason for undertaking projects on a DIY basis (Peng, 2009), partly relating to the mess created, but also issues of reliability and conflict over scope of work and quality of finishes. The loss of control while welcome for some,[312] is something most participants felt anxious about, not inviting contributions from *outsiders*[313] on their projects. For participants like Lotus, without any building skills, the concern was more about privacy, disruption/mess or being overcharged. For those capable of doing building tasks, the concern was more about the cost and quality of work.

As the boundaries of Fleetwood's spare time shrank to fit his DIY project, the house expanded to dominate his every waking moment. Life outside the home went on hold, normal social patterns disrupted; a new existence dominated by tools, tasks and tiredness was broken only by occasional trips to the hardware store. The house became a work site and storage shed as well as somewhere to sleep, eat and wash. The visceral everyday experience of living in the project site may be a memory for some participants, but was very real for Fleetwood:

[311] For example, often requiring temporary measures to facilitate living within a building site.
[312] For example, Lotus welcomed the help of contractors installing the irrigation and invited them in the house.
[313] Regardless of expertise, some participants considered anyone beyond their circle of familiarity as outsiders and untrustworthy, refer 'kinship residential sectors' and 'spectrum of reciprocity' after Sahlins (Figure 3.10).

QUOTE PARTICIPANT CONVERSATIONS

Fleetwood: I do want to get it finished now because I want my life back. It's gone on far too long, I've dragged it out for far too long and because [girlfriend] left I did nothing for two years... I just couldn't be arsed. Then, so you are living in a shithole, and it's all really depressing. I'm totally sick of it - I really am sick of it.

Of those who tackled home improvement projects on a DIY basis, most admitted the experience was rewarding and on a functional level achieved the desired outcome (Appendix 2). Interviewees recounted their DIY adventures willingly, their stories usually told with drama and self-depreciating humour and always populated with other people. Partners, family, friends and all number of colourful characters shared in the renovation rollercoaster, thus DIW, many posing with tools in photographs all and if present at interviews contributed to the narrative (Figure 4.36).

A cautionary reminder here; the majority of the (non case study) interviews took place many years *after* the DIY event, an event typified by multi-sensory disruption of home life, mess, noise, exhaustion, injuries, continual cleaning, expense, frustration, and disappointment. The dust had quite literally settled and the blood, sweat and tears faded beyond memory. Perhaps it is the ability to *heal* so completely from disruption and the surprising ease with which our life returns to relative normality, which drives people to engage with further disruption, to plan more renovation or look for another house. According to Marcus:

> Where we live becomes a kind of stage set onto which our self-image is projected via moveable (i.e., controllable) objects. The house interior for most people – unlike the structure itself – is rarely wholly fixed or finished. Like the exploration of the self, the arrangement of the domestic interior is often in the process of becoming. (1995, p. 59)

The stage set itself, the bricks and mortar home; is also a project rarely fixed or finished. When imagination, ideals, and ambition exceed skills, capability or available resources, the reality can be an interminable period of disruption. Of all the participants interviewed, including those not featured in this thesis, few enjoy a

symbiotic relationship with their home; many struggled with the inflexibility of the physical space and the relative flexibility or instability of their needs and wants. A number of participants, or younger incarnations in what they called their "*DIY phase*", bought affordable old or run down property and energetically set about transforming the homes of others into homes of their own. Few repeated the renovation process in its entirety with a subsequent house, and fewer still continue to engage or *tinker* with their home in the long term.

Figure 4.36: DIW - Participants captured by and with other people, tools and mess

Disturbance and temporality – Rubik's cube effect

The disruption of space and time (temporality) connects with the problematic *organisation* of the work site while also living in the home. Fleetwood and Jasper, and to a lesser extent Lotus, were subject to the continual shuffling of belongings around in order to clear space for the next stage of work, or get access through to another part of the house:

Fleetwood: I mean there is nowhere, when we are watching the TV, when we are eating; it's all just done on the bed, wherever the bed is. It's a crap way to live. I'm cutting decking timbers in there [spare bedroom] and then there is dirt and dust going everywhere, and it is all just shit... Living in a renovation is mentally challenging, not doing it.

Even for a single area, such as one room, the impact of DIY cannot be contained or isolated from other spaces or from daily routines. The "Rubik's cube effect"/multiple handling has followed Jasper and Pollywaffle through all their home relocations, occurring every time any improvements, including decorating, are planned. The accumulation of furniture made it difficult to empty a room in preparation for DIY, so things were shuffled, double-handled, stacked up, temporarily condensed. For many participants the anxiety of living with clutter was compounded by emptying a room, perhaps more bearable given the temporary nature, but it provided Jasper with a rude reminder that they "had too much stuff". The house as Rubik's cube appears in sharp contrast to the clinically stylised pared down interiors of the dream homes in magazines and on real estate sale boards.

In one project completed by Jasper with help from Paperbark, two rooms were cleared out in order to replace the ceiling linings. Both decided it was more efficient to work in an empty space, but all the decanted items had to be squeezed into other living spaces. This rendered other rooms so crammed with the dislocated belongings that they were effectively unusable. After starting, Paperbark and Jasper decided to extend the work area, re-sheeting the bathroom ceiling, while they had all the materials *to hand* and time available. With the only

bathroom in the house sealed off to reduce the transfer of mess in and out (by humans or pets), this made life even more difficult for a week. Access kept clear enough for an occasional dash, but otherwise shut off like a prison cell over night to prevent pets and plaster dust mingling unhappily. Patterns of living changed temporarily in a household again under (re)construction, always with an assumption that things would return to *normal* quicker than they ultimately do.

The loss of valuable spare time spent moving and re-moving items around for access as they block circulation around the house, was compounded by the loss of things, misplaced, set down or hidden from view. Locations of objects mind-mapped over years of previous use were in flux. The creep of dust and dirt on feet and clothes from the worksite matched the relocation of belongings into the remainder of the house, with tools and materials are sucked from the driveway, shed and workshop into the vacuum of the emptied room.

In the case of Jasper's veranda, the room became a space of temporality (Figure 4.37). Previously an informal sun room, the veranda continued to function as a social space, but specifically then for the *workmen* as Paperbark and Jasper saw and hammer and fasten, and then review their progress over tea breaks, brought in by Jasper's partner. The room filled with ladders and equipment belonging to both men, forming a pool of shared items and also shared knowledge, activity, sweat and noise. As a builder and a designer, the DIY team were found to look, reflect, discuss, resolve, demonstrate, and continually share knowledge, not only related to the immediate context of work, but on broader issues that came to mind. The room remained in use for circulation and access to the only toilet, although more selectively than usual with all doors and windows kept shut. Utensils and objects were appropriated from the kitchen; dining chairs brought in to rest timber on, plastic food containers to mix plaster in, blunt butter knives to prize up tacks.

Eventually the veranda was finished and almost immediately used for the storage of furniture and belongings decanted *from* other rooms, as they in turn become work sites of redecoration. Annoyingly for Jasper, the decanted *filler* stuff had to be

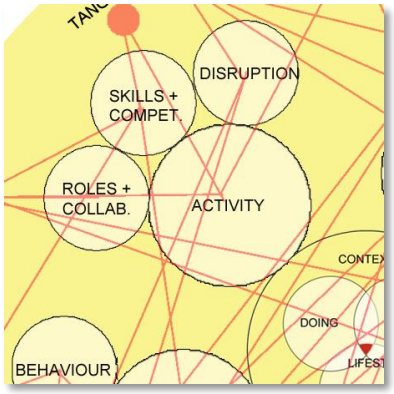
1. Full - veranda as used prior to the start of renovation
2. Empty - preparation stage with previous contents relocated elsewhere in house
3. Full - as work site, tools and materials introduced, relocated from elsewhere
4. Refilled - with dislocated household items from next work site

Figure 4.37: Two weeks in the life of Jasper's veranda – the Rubik's cube effect.

shuffled continually around the room as ladders and equipment being used elsewhere had to be stored in there overnight. Eventually the tools and dislocated DIY detritus were returned to original locations or thrown out, although inevitably something always failed to find it's former home. The veranda eventually returned to order, re-styled ready for *normal* use once again.

As mutual friends visited, the room became a gallery of handiwork, a domestic cathedral of DIY[314] as eyes cast upwards momentarily admiring the new flat white ceiling, the disturbance and mess a fleeting memory. Although the rejuvenated room disappeared into the background of Jasper's home life, the ceiling bore testimony to the mutual respect and friendship shared by the two participants. However temporary the actual work event(s), the social and physical process of DIY, weeks spent up ladders and sitting on crates drinking tea—collaborating, was and is still kept alive in their conversations.

Connecting doing with dream making



Exploring participant DIY careers and witnessing the transfer of knowledge between individuals working together, the level of skill and competence, and the nature of the experience, is found to influence future patterns of engagement. Practical know-how brought with it a greater likelihood of tackling new projects, giving individuals the capacity to bring ideas into reality.

[314] After 'the church of DIY' poem by Homespun's wife, section 4.5.

DIY home improvement can be considered an important vehicle for self-discovery, where the building site exists as both external and internal space under construction. The dream makers have, by choice, engaged with the process of change, intervening in a space and in doing so with the process of transformation. For Jasper as the others, the importance of having *a project* "on the go" illustrates a desire to actively and periodically construct or reconstruct lifestyle through physical, psychological, cultural and social means.

Extending this further, the home improvement *project* as a vehicle for the improvement of lifestyles, both actual and perceived, presents an opportunity for designers to assist people already motivated to turn their dreams a reality, but aware of their limitations. DIY also offers designers a way of engaging with the dynamic experience of other stakeholders in a team, the homeowner as client and the builder. As an architect, Fleetwood was guarded about letting anyone else work on *his* project; reluctant to risk an outcome he was unable to control. Although not trusting tradesmen to assist in the transformation of *his* drawings into a three-dimensional home *he* will live in, he assumes his role as architect is different, expecting clients to trust *him* to design *their* homes, and builders to remain faithful to *his* drawings.

For those who had little or no building or design experience, such as Lotus, there was at once a sense that everything was *possible*, in her dreams, but that little was achievable. Given her lack of resources, knowledge, support and physical strength, making her dreams *real* seemed a daunting task at the outset of her first project. However, sufficiently motivated to seek assistance for both design and build work to shape to her dreams, Lotus subsequently became involved in the building work, developing her confidence in making decisions and tackling a number of practical tasks. For Lotus, while *doing* was a rewarding and creative activity, she accepted her limitations, and like others, remained more captivated by the dreaming and planning of projects than the execution of them. It could be argued that with greater access to both design and build expertise, Lotus might *do* more to make her dreams real.

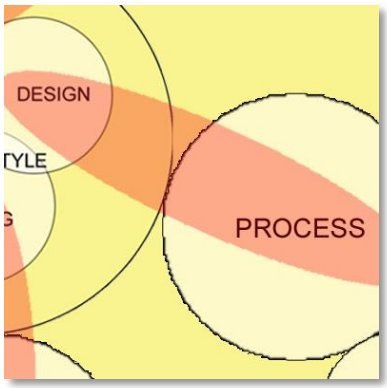
4.6 Design

In this study, design has been identified as a commercial practice bounded by technical knowledge and specific to a sector (such as architecture, product design, software design). Design skills are embedded in the designer's capabilities and experience and facilitate the role(s) they take, usually at the front end of a build project. However, professional designers are usually absent from a DIY project, unless it is their own home; the DIYer takes on the role of designer or creator, together with the roles of builder and client. Just as participant DIYers benefitted from improved competence, skills, technical knowledge and experience in building as indicated in the previous section (4.4), this section considers the role of designers, and whether DIYers benefit from improved competence in design, or from working in some capacity *with* a designer/co-design.

This section explores the thread *design* through participant data to determine:

(i) how people engage with the design process when considering home improvement activity, such as outsourcing or through their own practice,
(ii) to what extent designers utilise their design training when they undertake DIY work, such as with tools or strategy,
(iii) how non-designers make design decisions or express creativity when they undertake DIY work, and
(iv) whether the self-build context produces instances of design novelty not normally found in commercial projects.

Process – conceptual plane for design



Design activity + experience

Of the forty responses to a question asking participants their current or most recent occupation, fifteen (37.5%) indicated they were qualified professionals, seven in the same "family of design professions" (Schön, 1983, p. 76), relating to the physical environment. As such, most of those had design expertise that was either partly or wholly relevant to the study focus, home renovation. The levels of design background were more straightforward to identify than DIY experience, with the exception of a middle range. Participants were either trained as design professionals or classified as non-designers. However, there were some participants who demonstrated some form of design training, through work experience, or through adult education classes or attended special interest courses.

Survey findings were filtered by DIY and by design background categories, however, the percentages were insufficient to draw major conclusions about the difference between those with design education and those without in matters of choice (Figure 4.38)[315]. Although the role of an architect has remained relatively unchanged for decades, some of the skills traditionally attributed to the profession have crept in to the public domain, such as *reading* scaled plan layouts. The real estate industry increasingly uses floor plans to sell property, both existing and

[315] Although patterns emerged from the survey responses, finding *significant* patterns in the data was made difficult given the small cohort numbers and selection strategy. Of the participants, however, the designers show a stronger interest in learning or improving art/drawing skills than non-designers as might be expected due to the nature of design work requiring visual communication skills.

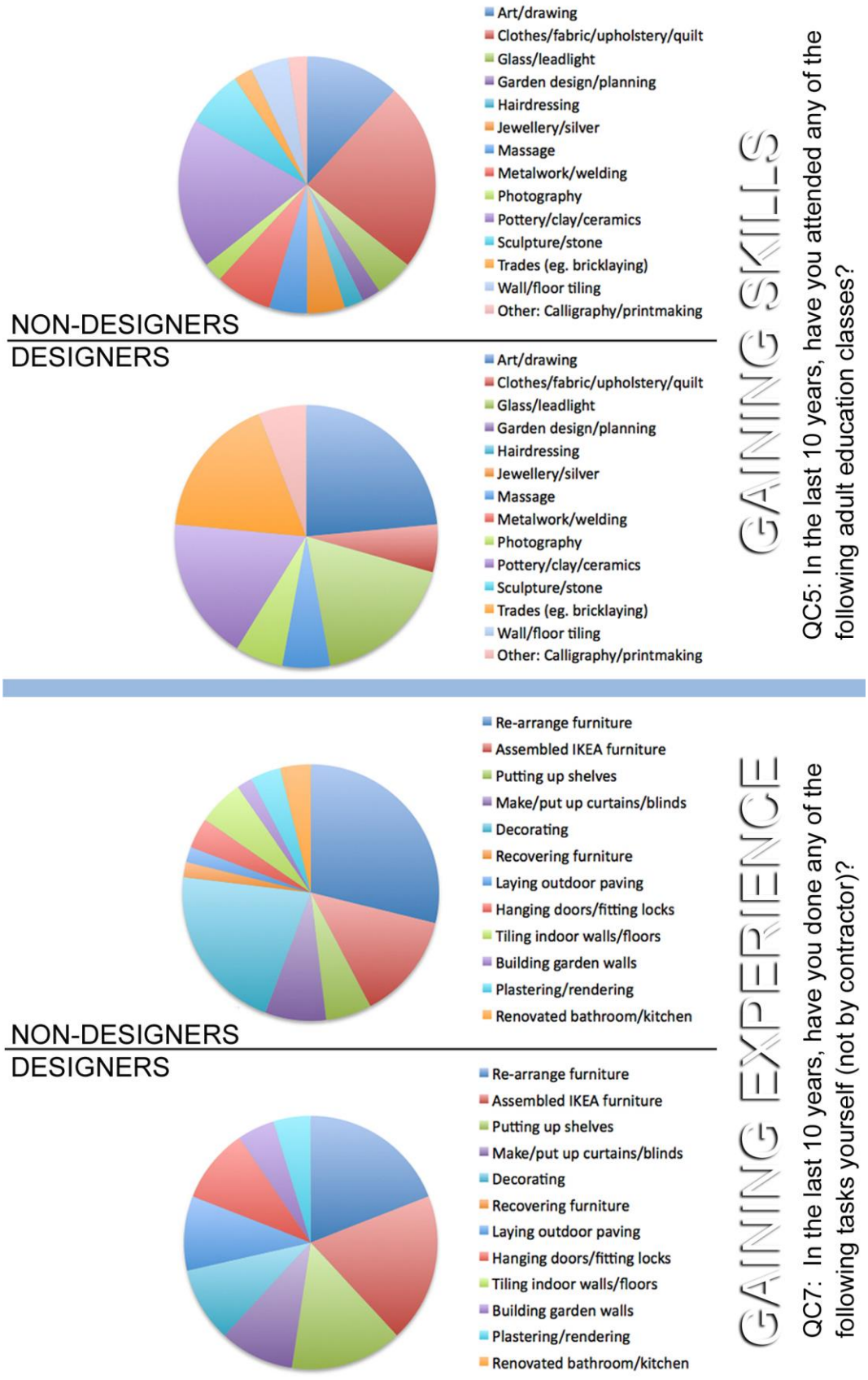
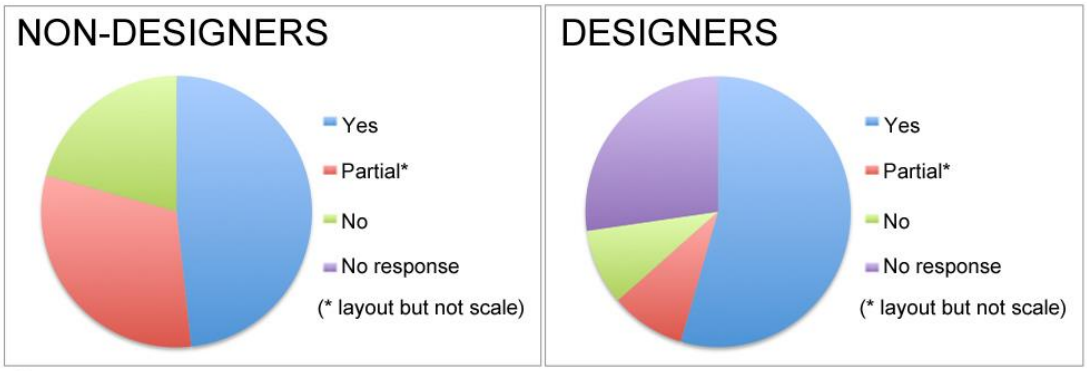


Figure 4.38: Gaining skills and experience (DIY tasks) – design and non-design backgrounds

newly build homes, working on the assumption that buyers are able to *read* them. When participants were asked if they could read and picture the house from a plan, almost three-quarters (70%) could interpret the layouts but only half (50%) felt they could fully understand the scale (Figure 4.39).



QA12: When you see house plan drawings to scale, would you say you can read and picture the house: (3 options: ☐yes easily, ☐yes for the layout but not the scale, ☐no I need to see the real/display house)

Figure 4.39: Design and non-design backgrounds

In relation to home decor, a larger percentage of non-designers than designers self-assessed as inventive/creative and competent/stylish**,** suggesting the latter exercised either professional modesty or a focus on technical aspects of training (Appendix 3). Further survey questions touching on issues of taste and preference contribute to the profile of the cohort; however, they were insufficiently detailed to alter the assessment made on participant design backgrounds. The findings included observations such as:

- more designers than non-designers have taken classes in art/drawing and in photography,
- equal numbers of both have taken garden design courses,
- more designers have taken classes relating to trades than non-designers,
- more non-designers have taken classes relating to fabrics,
- more non-designers than designers have re-arranged furniture, tiled indoor areas and decorated in the last ten years, and
- more designers have assembled IKEA items, put up shelves, laid outdoor paving and hung doors.

Table 9: DIY and design skill levels leading to notion of hybrid practice

SKILL LEVELS	DIY EXPERIENCE	LEVELS OF EXPERTISE (design expertise)	DESIGN BEHAVIOUR
	Source: Study	Source: Dreyfus/Dorst (Dorst, 2004, p. 75)	Source: Cross (Cross, 2006, pp. 89-90)
Amateur practice: ***domestic scale, non-profit/indirect economic value***			
1	Nominal	Novice: follow strict rules	'Depth-first' approach: minimises cognitive load
2	Basic	Advanced beginner: sensitivity to exceptions, guidance used	'Depth-first' approach: deal with well-defined problems
3	Moderate	Competent: selective, trial-and-error, learning and reflection	'Depth-first' approach: deal with well-defined problems, increased flexibility to problem solving
4	Substantial	Proficient: quick identification of issues, create plan and reasoned action	'Depth-first' approach: more flexible approach, deal also with ill-defined problems
Professional practice: ***direct income producing*** (extended competence across 2 domains of knowledge/skill – theoretical categories)			
5	Professional - level A: context sensitive practitioner, e.g. architect or builder by trade, with adequate working knowledge of other skills - self-taught	Expert: intuitive response, immediate appropriate action	Top down and 'breadth-first' approach: minimises commitment, optimises design time and effort
6	Professional - level B: high level hybrid practitioner, e.g. builder with design training/experience via professional mentor	Master: non-standard ways of working broaden outcome and involvement	Top down and 'breadth-first' approach: deliberately treat a problem as ill-defined
7	Professional - level C: highest level of training in multiple fields, e.g. architect with formal training/experience as builder	Visionary: consciously striving to extend domain of work, seek new domains	Top down and 'breadth-first' approach: deliberately treat a problem as ill-defined, develop first principles each time

The attribute *design background* was developed similarly to the attribute *DIY background*, taking into account Dorst's "competency based model of design thinking" (2004, p. 72), Dreyfus' levels of expertise, and the Nigel Cross eight basic design abilities (2006). Dorst emphasises that "the levels can co-exist within a single design project" (2004, p. 76), or person, and critical to this study, transition between levels that takes into account a *learning by doing* approach.

The category *design background* comprised four options or levels of expertise, novice, competent/advanced beginner, proficient and expert/professional (Table 9). The level *expert (*together with *master* and *visionary*) were later removed from both DIY and design backgrounds in order to focus on the amateur realm of serious leisure in contrast to the work undertaken in a professional capacity (Figure 4.40). This exclusion identified participant input to DIY projects as design expertise with a *depth-first* approach according to Cross (2006), however, an architect by training would still bring a top down and *breadth-first* approach to specific tasks that mirrors their professional work.

The case study projects facilitated investigation of the two approaches, with Fleetwood—an architect, Jasper—an urban designer and Lotus—a creative writer. The two designers are observed as they work on private informal projects, to see how closely they apply their training without the normal constraints of formalised professional practice. The case study also investigates the interplay of design and DIY skills in developing the concept of hybrid practice implicated by the combination of these two key attributes in one person, discussed further in section 4.7.

The following matrix acknowledges Dreyfus' levels of expertise, and indicates combined skill levels taking into account the separate attributes assigned to participants (Table 10). Conceptually, those with formal training and experience for *both* skill sets, design and DIY, would be capable of reaching overall skill level 7,

equivalent to the Dreyfus “visionary” (1980).[316] Acknowledging competence in both design *and* build skills, the matrix introduced different configurations of two-way or dual hybridity.

Table 10: Skill levels matrix with proposed assessment of hybrid practitioners

SKILL LEVELS Design: DIY:	None	Some	Professional
Nominal	1	1	1
Basic	2	2	2
Moderate	3	3	4-5
Substantial	4-5	6	7

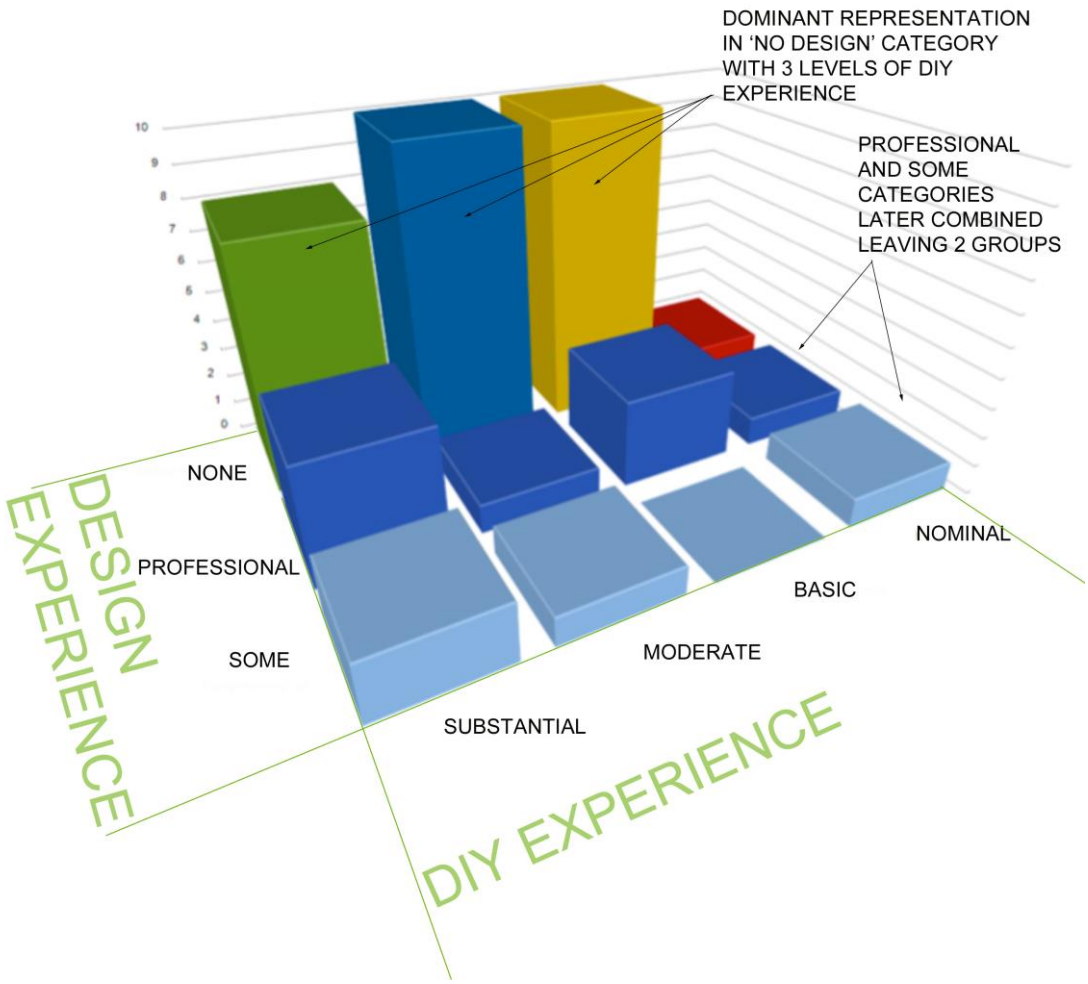


Figure 4.40: Bar chart showing combined skill level attribute groups

[316] For example, where building or construction is a self-build practice such as a professional builder who does most of the work himself.

LOCATING PARTICIPANTS BY DIY AND DESIGN BACKGROUNDS

Notes on characteristics and human situational understanding adapted from Dreyfus (1981) and (1984), (source: http://www.sld.demon.co.uk/dreyfus.pdf).

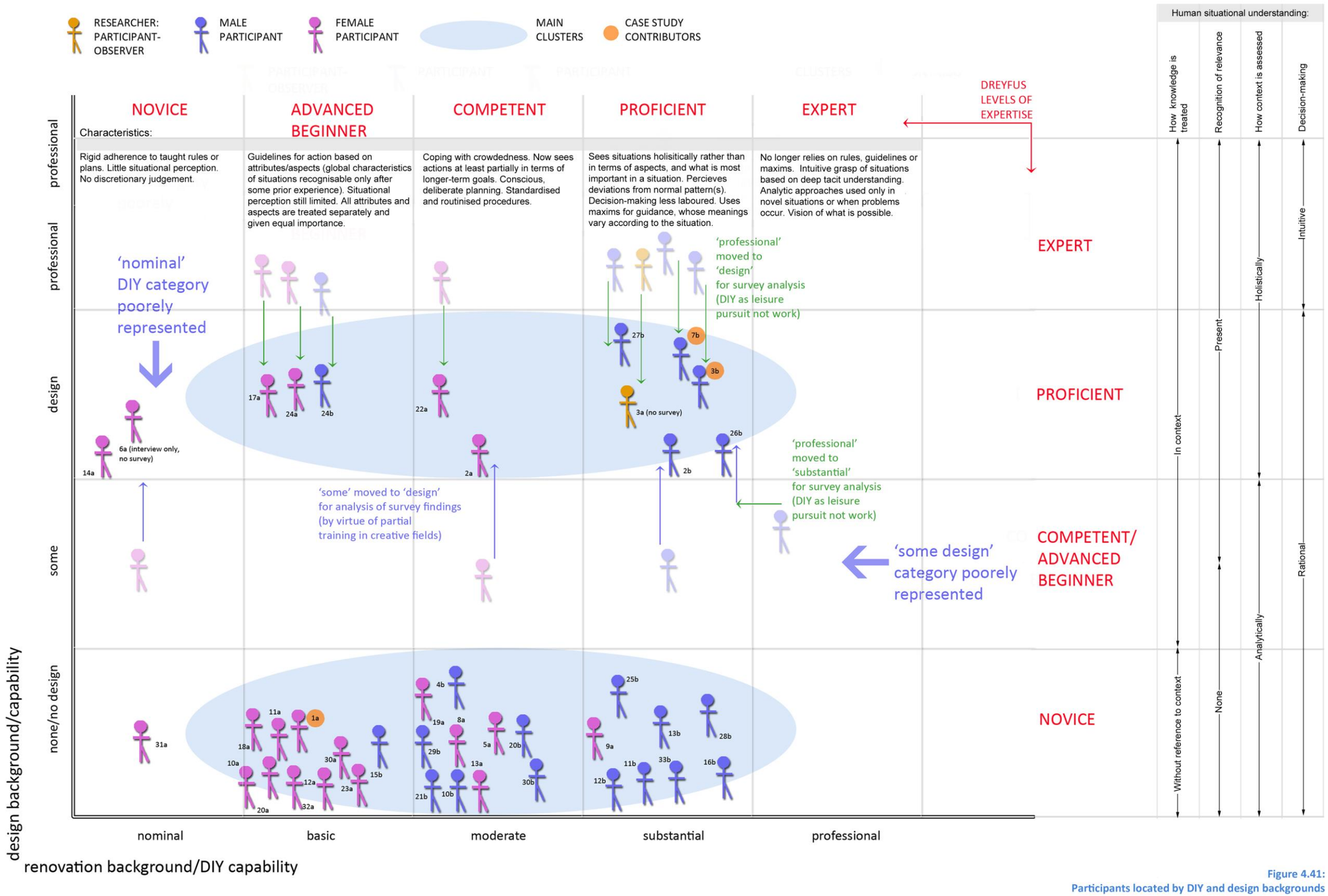


Figure 4.41:
Participants located by DIY and design backgrounds

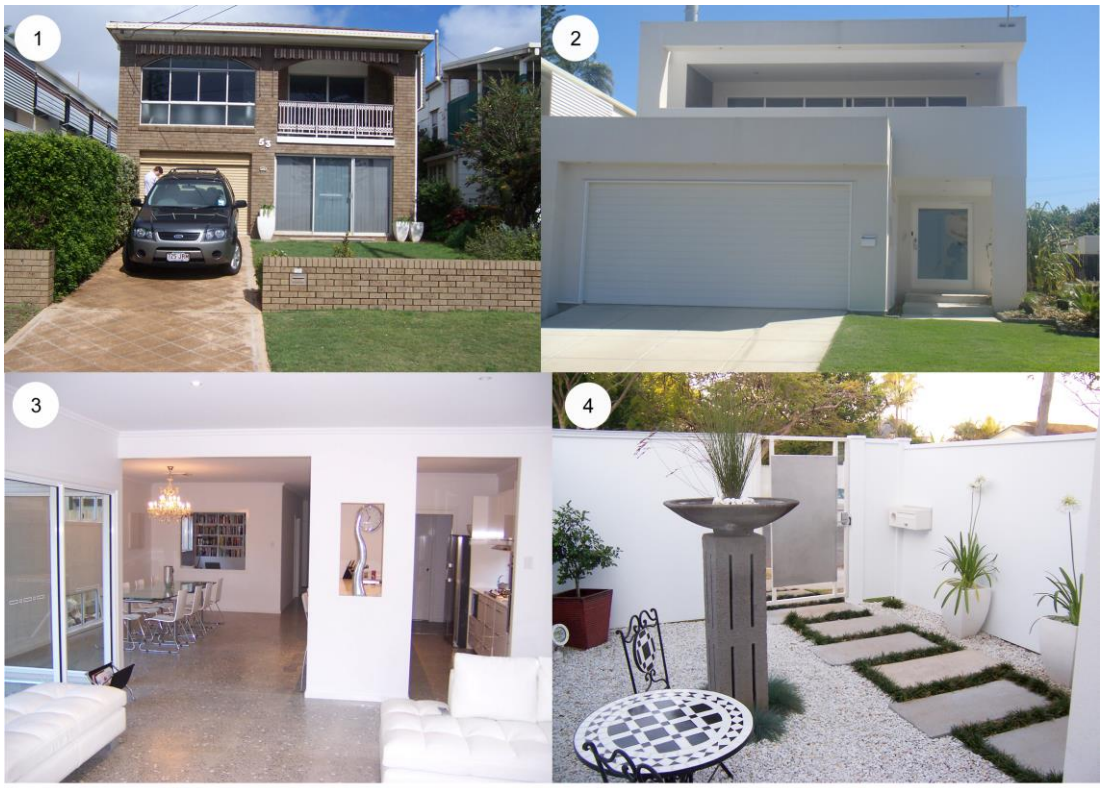
As participant responses were analysed and the distribution of levels were calculated, the highest-level category was found to be 4-5 rather than 7. None of the participants were engaged in combined activity as a *professional* pursuit, nor did any of them claim to be *experts*.

Interviews and personal knowledge enabled fine-tuning of these levels and more appropriate positioning of individuals in the combination skill level groups, and a more accurate representation of participants on the graphic chart (Figure 4.41). The chart illustrates the strategic location of the three case study participants and myself as researcher, against the *DIY background* outlined in section 4.4 and *design background*, and indicates the separation of this cohort broadly into two groups – designers and non-designers.

Design It Yourself

Having differentiated between designers and non-designers within the cohort, and identifying the skill base that formally trained design professionals bring to a design problem (Table 9), it was important to investigate what *being a designer* brings to a practice such as DIY.

The notion of *design it yourself* is perhaps the most troublesome aspect of DIY renovation projects. The DIY ethic of self-sufficiency suggests that anyone is capable of undertaking tasks without the need to employ specialists, even for design (Foege, 2013). Professional designers like Cachet, Lexicon, Jasper and Fleetwood, however, argued otherwise in interviews, describing the extent of training and the depth of experience required to become a competent designer. Cachet voiced her frustration at people undervaluing design training, or even expecting professional advice for free.



1 and 2. Riot's current house in Queensland before and after DIY renovation work. 3 and 4. Riot's previous house. Both houses strongly modelled on and inspired by images from architectural or design focused magazines and books.

Figure 4.42: Riot's collage of design ideas

Participant Riot best demonstrated a *design it yourself* approach, attracted by high quality professionally designed buildings and interiors, but had no formal training on the process of creating bespoke masterpieces. Instead, he adopted a *cut and paste* approach to adapting spaces and his houses are ultimately collage of ideas he has gleaned from magazines, display homes, images on the Internet or friend's homes (Figure 4.42).

QUOTE PARTICIPANT CONVERSATIONS

Riot: I am a sponge! Or some people would say a cheater cause I watch and cheat off what they are doing... A friend of mine in Sydney has got a one-bedroom unit – it is tiny, but he had the magazine. I can walk in his unit and see the magazine and his unit and he actually made it identical. The layout was close enough to do that. One bedroom, Sydney, New York style apartments, it all kind of went together and he made it work. It looked really good, just like a magazine, like the magazine picture.

The *situated* process of design did not feature very strongly in most accounts of DIY projects. Typically, Riot was more conscious about the *stylistic look* of the final project, than the integrity of the overall composition or design, and most narratives highlighted incidents, accidents, major constraints, shopping exploits, and social interventions such as working long hours with friends. Some people documented the main stages of the construction through photographs, while others like Riot, only took images of the end result. No-none in the study, formally documented the various stages of involvement in what might be considered aspects of the *design process* for their own records.[317] During the case study there were glimpses of design resolution in process, yet these were often quick scribbles on materials *to hand* and discarded once a decision had been made (Figures 4.43, 4.44).

1. Jasper helping Lotus interpret and adapt the (previously commissioned) design plan to include her ideas. 2, 3 and 4. Jasper working with Lotus and her grandson in the garden translating the design onto the ground, temporarily placing bricks to show hard area alignment.

Figure 4.43: Jasper helping Lotus work through design ideas for her project

[317] The design participants only documented design issues for formal submissions, such as planning approval, engineering verification or contractor quotes (e.g. licensed electricians/plumbers).

1. Paperbark helping Jasper put new ceiling in veranda, working late at night. 2. Evidence of design discussion over detailing of cornice; a sketch on the first material to hand - plasterboard.

Figure 4.44: Jasper and Paperbark working through ceiling joint details

Taking design process to include the methods and tools used, the progression of thinking and the emergent design situation the DIYer finds him or herself in (Dorst & Dijkhuis, 1995), the process of design was largely invisible. That is to say, most participants were unaware of the way they went about making decisions on how something might look or work. Several participants collected design images, such as Riot and Popsicle, and some construction magazines as testified by Paperbark's extensive collection of Woodworker magazines, to feed their imagination but rarely *did* anything with the images by way of developing the ideas further.

Design consultants such as Fleetwood, an architect, found it difficult to deal with clients who had access to so many images, thus dislocated ideas. Clients expected that a multitude of two-dimensional images could be combined into a successful three-dimensional ensemble. This collage approach typical in the personalising of homes, bringing ideas and products from displays and showrooms, choosing paint from sample cards with images showing how the colour looks in use, although it usually happens in a more discreet and incremental way (Figure 4.45).[318] Used to

[318] Some were conservative in their approach to decorating, one couple recorded the date and room colours *onto* the paint charts, both as a record to match paint, and as reminder to re-decorate and 'freshen' every few years with the *same* colour.

seeing instant makeovers on television, clients expect designers to have entire house designs *on stock.*[319]

Figure 4.45: Paint colour charts used for documentation as well as inspiration

As previously mentioned, in a society of consumers who expect instant gratification, the value of time spent thinking and resolving design issues *before taking action* is under estimated, and for DIYers the haste to pick up tools and begin demolition can sometimes come at great cost. Even Fleetwood started deconstructing his house before "putting the breaks on and going to back the drawing board" to consider what to remove and what to keep in the context of an overall scheme.

Interviews revealed inequalities in the value of design between the traditional or commercial realm and the private world of DIY. There was a notable lack of understanding about the value of design expertise, except by designers themselves, with several participants reluctant to pay for a professional to ease their frustration with home. From discussions with participant designers and other design professionals, the belief that design expertise was prohibitively expensive seemed difficult to overcome. With only one participant had a house designed specifically, engaging a professional was uncommon in the cohort, yet representational of the

[319] In other words, considering a design as an output available at short notice, or that the designer already has designs on stock/to hand, as do many of the home construction companies, section 3.5.

small number of people who enjoy a bespoke home. In addition, design professionals rarely followed the traditional linear design-led process on projects in the case study, perhaps suggesting a different value system applied to design practiced on the home, or *at home*.

Design process: Formal patterns of practice

Design expertise is generally considered the domain of professional practitioners, with membership institutions mediating between industry and academia, as previously outlined in section 3.6. Professional practice exams determine a base level of applied knowledge generated through university qualifications and postgraduate training. Reinforcing vocational education is the experiential knowledge gained at work in the design office environment with peers to provide *on the job* mentoring. For the qualified design professional, such as the seven design participants, the generation of new knowledge through work experience thus occurs within the usual boundaries of day-to-day practice. Structured training and on going learning, enables designers to continue developing their specialised thinking and communication skills over their careers.

Taking architecture as the design discipline most closely associated with domestic buildings, there are many benefits to hiring someone with certified and formalised training.[320] These include the assurance a project will conform to legislation/planning controls and accepted standards for construction, will respond to client requirements *creatively*, will be documented clearly for construction, and ensure work gets completed on site as specified. According to the Australian Institute of Architects the role of an architect is diverse, requiring multiple creative and imaginative skills, "an understanding of history, cultural and environmental concerns" (AIA, 2012) and a wide range of communication, research and analysis abilities.

[320] A view reflected in Handyman magazine, by both designers in the study and by Lotus as the only participant to have a new house designed and built to her requirements.

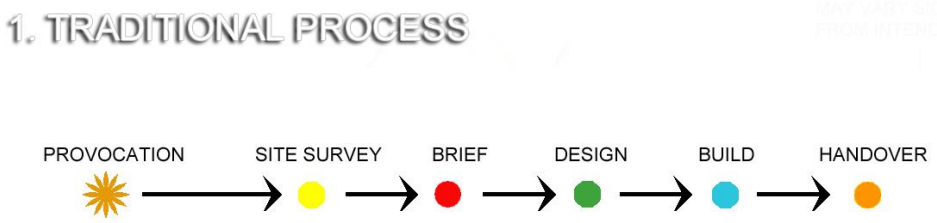


Figure 4.46: Traditional process - linear design and build (doing), provocation added

Although design as an activity is inherently iterative and reflective, the constraints of each professional role within their industry frequently forces designers to work with a linear process (Cross, 2006; Schön, 1983) (Figures 4.46). Lawson reflects on the *standard sequence of activities* for architectural projects as modeled by the RIBA, believing it an overly restrictive and inaccurate guide to clients and consultants alike (1997). He acknowledges the attraction of systems or procedures, in this case helping define a field of expertise for the professional association and "results that are *reproducible*" (2004, p. 16, emphasis in the original). However, Lawson also points out the shortfalls of a singular approach driven by commercial time constraints, the kind that has led to over-specialisation, making designers "almost entirely self-reliant in a way which may seriously distort the way knowledge is used in the designing process" (2004, p. 16).

Architects operate within stringent constraints of practice, in a system that organises consultant input and trades in a linear staged process, taking a client's requirements to realisation on site in the most efficient way possible. The origin of this process, the client brief, binds the provocation—the need to change something, with the imagination—ideas for improved, future modes of living. Yet, according to experienced architect Lexicon, this most often takes the form of representative (media driven) rather than perceptive (observation driven) notions of living; collections of magazine images and real estate house plans. Client requirements when drawn from *idealised* images are thus disconnected, sometimes deliberately, from their own reality mapped out by domestic routines.

Although only Lotus commissioned a new house, it was clear that most if not all participants had been touched by someone's design training during DIY, through the products, appliances and tools they used or brought into their homes, or through the images in magazines or on the television. The retail, real estate and media industries encourage homeowners to focus on the future, on new things to buy, make or do, yet when it comes to the way we live or relate to our home environment during change, the disconnect between real and ideal becomes apparent. The specialisation of design practice and the traditional design-build process has contributed to this disconnect.

If, as Mike Press believes, "a designer is cultural intermediary" (2003, p. 6), then breaking formal patterns of practice may encourage designers to work more directly with homeowners/clients on self-build modification projects, mediating not dictating the process of shaping and making dreams. Both Israel's visualisation exercise (Figure 5.6) and Csikzentmihalyi's systems model of creativity (Figure 3.14) are useful tools for reconnecting with ideas of 'ideal' an home as identified in the survey—somewhere *comfortable*, *spacious*, *easy to maintain* and *well-designed*—linking future with past through social, cultural and physical environmental stories.

Beyond formal patterns of practice

Through comparison of commercial projects[321] with DIY projects through the case study, it is possible to determine that the conventional sequence follows a *generally linear* design-then-build process, with design resolution either largely or entirely complete before the building work starts on site (Figure 4.47).[322]

Traditionally, a new build or renovation project begins with a stimulus (provocation) inciting action. The homeowner considers the feasibility of making changes, however, without the skills to realise their ideas, typically becomes an architect's

[321] For example, a new house project or renovation completed exclusively by a builder/building company.
[322] Differentiated here from the term, design-build where a single entity is responsible for both, raising issues such as a loss of design control on complex projects. However there are similarities between design-build and the traditional process, including the order of work, design-then-build (Cushman & Louakis, 2001).

client, or may decide on inaction and do nothing (section 3.2). Professional designers work from the requirements/constraints of the main stakeholder (client), and the physical constraints of the site.[323] The order and scope of work is embedded in the location[324] (*context*) and the specific wants, needs and budget of the person who has engaged their services (*having*). The work moves through design stages from concept to refinement (design) before construction commences on site (*doing*). The final stage is the handover of the finished house to the client, who then occupies the house in its new state anticipating an improved way of living (*lifestyle*).

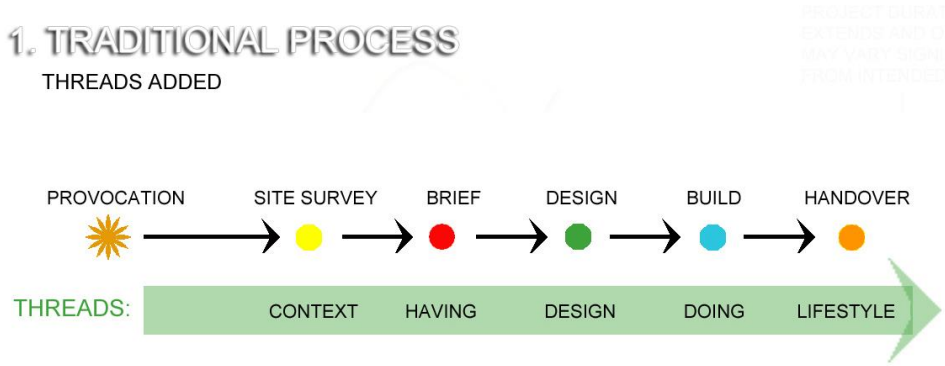


Figure 4.47: Traditional process – design and build (new build) with threads added

Although traditionally organised new home projects generally follow a linear process as illustrated, resources can be controlled and pre-determined, the site vacated and receptive to a new configuration of building and utilities. With renovation projects the design-then-build process is frequently more indirect and ill defined (new on old), existing houses with unknown factors causing unforeseen problems once the build work has started (Figure 4.48). Frequently assumptions made at the outset such as timeline and budgets are quickly undermined, even experienced consultants often underestimating the amount and type of work involved. It is for this reason that most architectural offices, such as Fleetwood's, prefer to take on only new build projects.

[323] To include constraints—budget, legislation, contractors, and opportunities—own ideas, prevailing market trends, new materials.
[324] Broadly encompassing physical, social, cultural, political/legislative, and environmental issues.

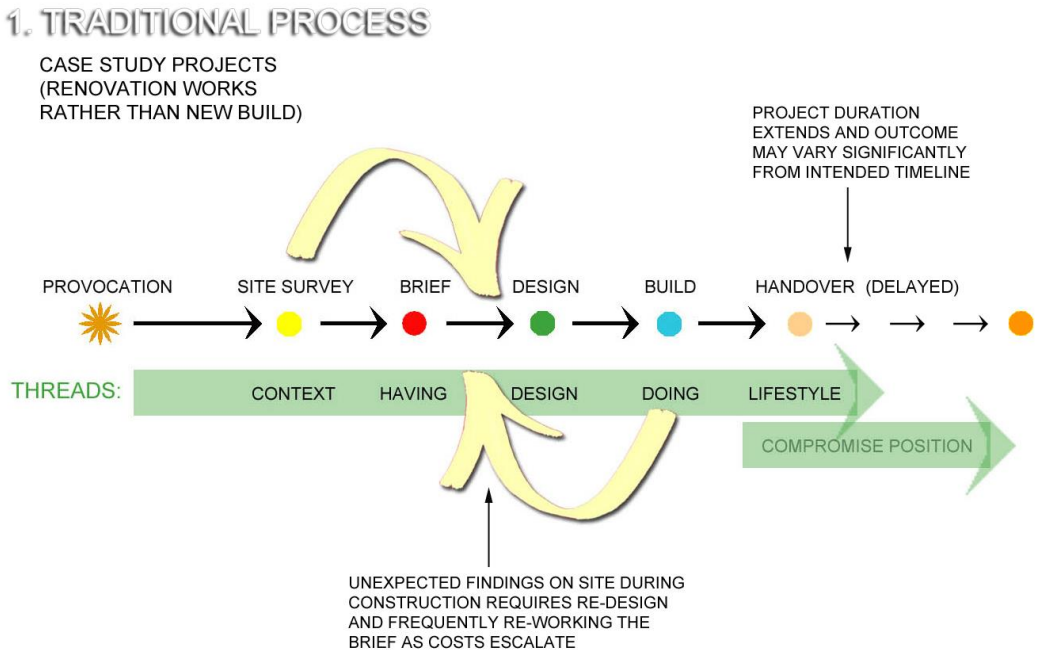


Figure 4.48: Traditional process – design and build (renovation) as for case studies

For his own renovation, Fleetwood claimed to have followed a design and planning process that mirrors the method he would use in his workplace, but as it transpired the order of activities was partly reversed. The project had not begun with a site inspection and client brief followed by design and finally site works, but with DIY building activity on site, Fleetwood *doing*, or rather un-doing, *before* considering design. Fleetwood cleared out cupboards that irritated him, or rather what they represented—living an old, tired ill-fitting house, this act became the provocation for further change. Fleetwood reacted to the site, satisfying his need for action before considering what would be exposed or what opportunities the existing structure offered.

Fleetwood then returned to the discipline of his professional work, producing full working drawings before continuing with the alterations. Even when pressed, Fleetwood was adamant he had not cut any corners in his separate roles as designer and then builder; he maintained that the design drawings, including his plan, had been followed in every detail (Figure 4.49).

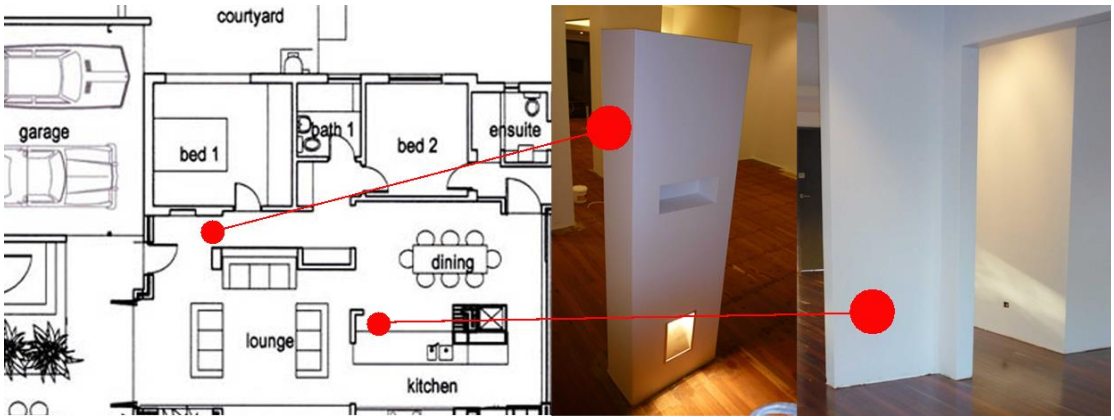


Figure 4.49: Fleetwood's design plan and subsequent elements built as drawn.

In contrast Jasper followed a less linear, *more improvised* process of renovation, in current and previous projects. Jasper's experience with a similar extensive remodelling project, nine years previously in Queensland, revealed a similar attempt to separate design and build roles as Fleetwood, but he found he was constantly redesigning as the build progressed. Once Jasper removed old structures he came across new issues to resolve before moving forward (Figure 4.50). With an extensive project the non-linear process increases the anticipated time, cost and work involved significantly, and even with Fleetwood's more traditional approach, he was still unable to maintain control or contain "blow-outs of time and money".

A comparison of the predominant design and build processes observed during the case study (Figure 4.50), illustrates variation depending upon the type of design knowledge, how it is applied, and what happens when design expertise comes from *outside*[325]. Three main variations to the project development process were observed during the case study, contrasting with the traditional design-build process and a conceptual *bricolage* process, which emerged from the combined practices of all participants, and where *design* becomes intertwined with the other threads. Fleetwood shows the most self-reliance and demonstrates the closest relationship between his professional work and his DIY activity, while for Jasper and Lotus the distance is greater. For Fleetwood the design drawings had become a contract, rather than a work in progress or tool for thinking. For Jasper, moving

[325] For example in Lotus' project where she seeks both design and build assistance from others.

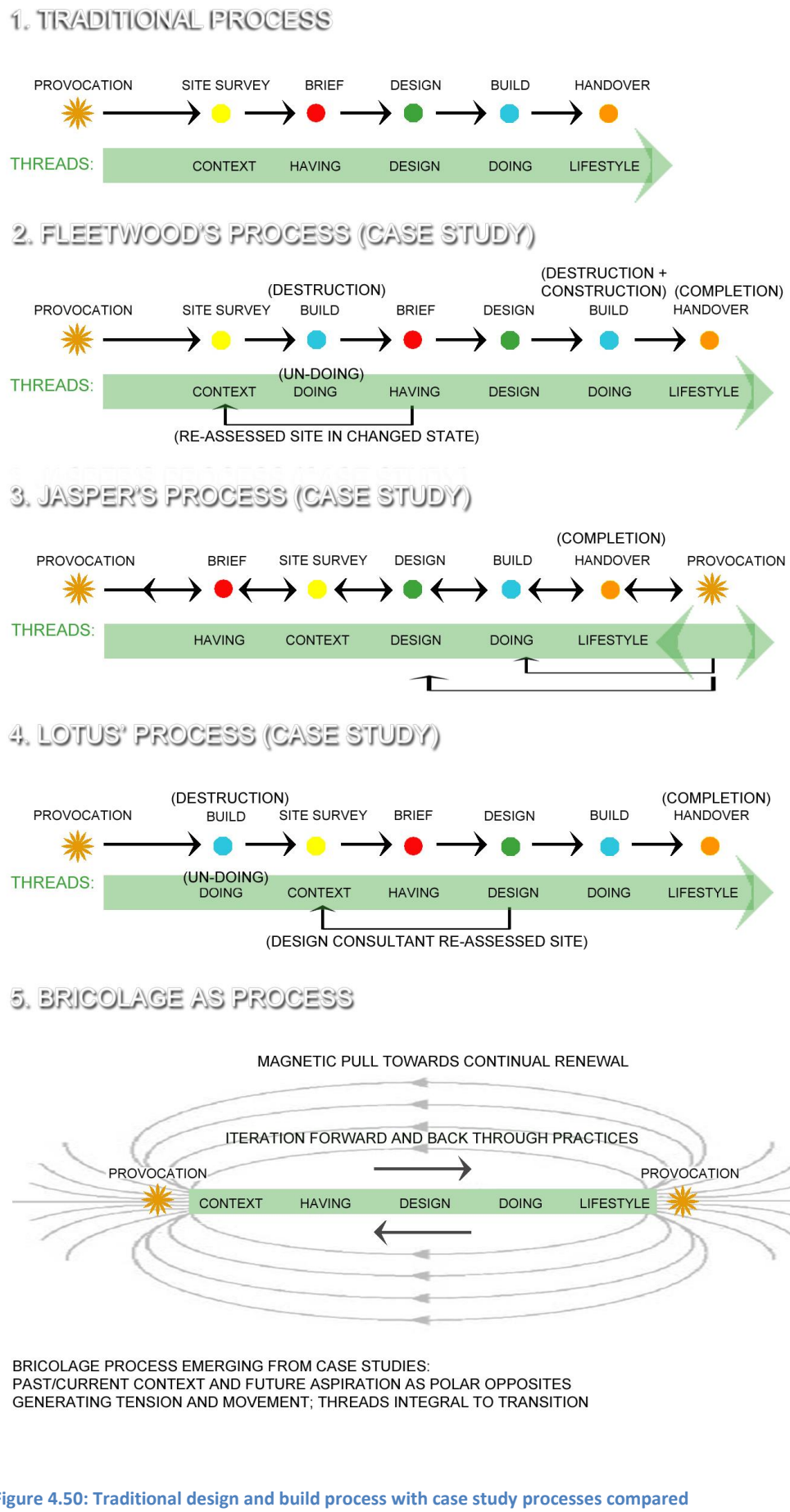


Figure 4.50: Traditional design and build process with case study processes compared

away from the standard linear process[326] creates space for a more organic evolution of ideas to take place, allowing for other influences on design process.

Jasper used his design expertise developing ideas to match his build capability, his pre-existing design knowledge assimilating with the new experiential knowledge as he progressed from one improvement task to another depending on the challenges presented. Although Jasper was a proficient DIYer, he still favoured using materials and techniques he was comfortable with rather than designing what he might *ideally* want to build; he used design skills to moderate projects so they were broadly within his build competence. Fleetwood, however, designed as if he were handing the drawings to an experienced builder, and then tried to do it himself or occasionally outsourced the build tasks he was not familiar or confident with:

Fleetwood: I just think things should be as I draw them, it is how the world is in my head. I've done the drawings and I've specified every single hinge.

The impulsive way Lotus started changing her home was similar to the *undoing* action taken by Fleetwood, with Lotus the garden was pulled apart without any objective assessment of the context. Lotus found she had a space but no real vision, "I just thought I want something", and eventually commissioned a designer to come up with a sketch plan for her to follow. The garden designer completed a site appraisal (*a survey*), talked to Lotus about what she wanted (*a brief*) and produced a native plant garden plan and set of instructions (*a design*). By the time Lotus was ready to start *building*, she had changed her brief, wanting a Japanese style garden, but did not know how to adapt the design. At this stage Jasper revised the plan for her and helped translate the layout onto the ground to minimise the heavy work of altering existing footpaths (Figure 4.43). Lotus started her project with (un)*doing*, and later looped back to site analysis once the design was revisited.

[326] For example, where most design decisions are made at the beginning of a build project.

The projects tackled by Jasper during the case study period were occasionally linear, but mostly the stages overlapped. As an experienced designer, but not specifically an architect, Jasper had a less rigid set of perceptions about how a domestic build project should take place, less domain-oriented *functional fixedness* (section 3.5). Having developed a degree of competence with construction, the skills in both *design* and *doing* had become more blended, or at least worked in parallel as he conceptualised and actualized ideas. Describing the workshop project that evolved as time went on, Jasper found he often switched between practical and aesthetic considerations (section 4.4).

Jasper differentiated between his DIY approach to the project, and a *real* office-based situation describing what he would do "in reality", the latter producing more polished outcome than an amateur project. DIY here interpreted as *the reality,* whereas the professional design and build process (adequate resources implied) would produce *the ideal scenario*. As the client and designer and builder, thus hybrid practitioner, Jasper's judgement about the standard of work was ultimately based on optimisation rather than maximization (section 4.6); he determined that a less than professional level of finish (builder), and "less than ideal" resolution to the problem (designer) to be sufficient for his (client) needs. The tripartite negotiation between roles, on that and other DIY projects, frequently led to an interchangeable order of work (a non-linear process), influenced also by the situation or context and the brief identifying time, budget and resources. Additionally, working with his partner Pollywaffle, who also worked between roles and approaches alongside Jasper on many projects, increased the likelihood of interruptions to work stages and modification to the scope of the brief, design or build work.

The involvement of a second person working within all three roles often extended the time taken to make decisions as they tabled, discussed and worked through several design options, sometimes discovering a solution neither had previously considered. However, the second person helped reduce the time spent deliberating over options (*designing*), and the extra pair of hands reduced time and effort with *doing.* One of a couple frequently slipped into an assisting role with tasks delegated

to them or a supporting role facilitating the uninterrupted progress of the main DIYer.[327]

Findings indicated the collaboration of individuals on a project, whether couples, family or friends, created opportunities for novel solutions to problems and for new provocations, which in turn resulted in the reorganisation of the project or the refocusing of effort and time. Provocation, relating to ideas, techniques or materials, from an outside source was possible at any point during the project. Jasper's research on the Internet, for example, introduced another layer of possibilities for the workshop. Recycling materials he already had *to hand* and incorporating things he had *found*, Jasper had started the project before finding a storage system on line he liked, leading to a period of design trying to combine the bits already completed with new inspiration:

QUOTE PARTICIPANT CONVERSATIONS

Jasper: I just had an idea for a workbench, I needed a workbench and cupboards, that is all I started doing. There was an existing brick wall there so I worked to the limits of that. The workbench was easy, and then you need cupboards above the workbench so I Googled, I started looking at workshops and storage systems and realised that they were thousands and thousands of dollars for any workshop system so then I found this design for workshop cupboards on the internet, so just used those.

Pollywaffle: So you followed the instructions for that fairly closely?

Jasper: Yes I did actually, that's why they look so good (laughs). The stuff off the internet looks like a proper set of cupboards.The stuff that I've been stuffing around with looks a bit more 'home made' because I didn't design it all as one thing. I started from one side and worked my way to the other, so it has become a bit of a dog's breakfast to be honest.

Pollywaffle: Couldn't you have designed it all first?

Jasper: Well, yeah, I don't know, I just started. It started from the image in that book, so I managed to put that door in, and found some pegboard in a skip. Half of those materials were from skips. That's the other thing. So so actually the whole thing hasn't cost very much. But the reason it doesn't all line up, it doesn't all look nicely designed because I had to figure out a way of supporting a door horizontally and then one thing leads to another.

[327] For example, holding materials, passing tools, *doing* preparation work fetching supplies, visiting retail stores, making refreshments, and cleaning up.

Most new build homes are constructed using the traditional process outlined earlier (Figure 4.47), rarely allowing for mid-build modification or redesign should alternative provocations or events occur, and almost never allowing for the reuse of off-cut materials. For Jasper, what may be lost in speed (*doing*) and cohesiveness of the aesthetics of building (*design*), is gained in specificity of the project from idea to realisation (*context*), in economics and the satisfaction of utilising materials and that would otherwise be clutter in his own shed, or thrown out in skips (*having*).

In spite of their professional training oriented around resolving specific stages of project work and meeting deliverables, Jasper started without much planning and even Fleetwood admitted he "didn't think the whole process through". These participants as professionals *at home* could never quite replicate the discipline necessary in their work life, a situation where they are accountable *to others,* often beyond their circle of familiarity. Starting DIY projects at home, Jasper and Paperbark crossed the threshold into the realm of *pro-am* practice, and *our kind*.

Bricolage: more 'am' than 'pro'

The case study found variations in the type and order of DIY work based on pre-existing knowledge of, or lack of, design process facilitated by professional training. An architect (Fleetwood) followed a relatively rigid conventional approach to the design-build process on his own DIY project, by virtue of his formal training and personal adherence to it. A non-designer (Lotus) started with a creative impulse but on engaging a garden designer and contractor the project followed a broadly conventional process. The urban designer (Jasper), however, followed a more open process, juggling a number of smaller projects at the same time, negotiating on brief and design opportunities with his partner and delegating DIY tasks to each other. The larger projects gradually evolved as a collage of smaller projects were begun, progressed and eventually completed, as time, opportunity and resources were to hand, bricolage style. The various stages of each smaller project, offered up provocations, which in turn triggered changes in direction of work, shifted the emphasis of the activity, and revealed priorities not previously considered.

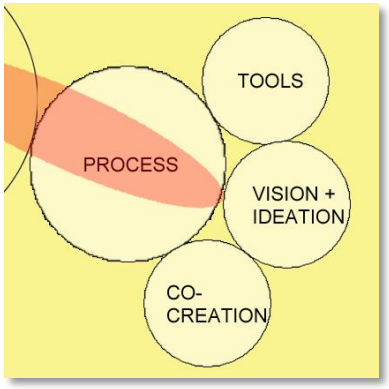
Both Lotus and Jasper made space in their schedule for recycling materials and accommodating any tools or materials *gifted* to them or found thus changing the course of action and outcome, whereas Fleetwood did not. Fleetwood had a clearly defined picture of the finished project and a focused on realising that image in its entirety. With traditional projects the *handover* marks the endpoint, a specific goal and materialisation of a vision, beyond which involvement relates to ongoing maintenance. Fleetwood and Lotus were working towards a defined endpoint, but for Jasper there was no handover until he put the house on the market. As Jaspers projects ended or went on hold he moved onto another task; the momentum of activity maintained even though not necessarily continuous (Figure 4.56).

The case study broadly documented journeys of three participants applying their imagination to a home-based project, beginning with a provocation and substantially ending when the space/place is ready for use. In applying build skills and design knowledge where applicable, participants have transformed an unsatisfactory situation into a preferred one, with *context*, *having*, *doing* and *design* issues all interwoven with the journey itself. Findings revealed the more domain specific the expertise, the more *pro* the approach to the work. The *am* approach materialised through participants who improvised,[328] were receptive to opportunity and proactive with change. However, the innate design knowledge some people had, such as Jasper, enabled them to *see* and develop opportunities for improvement emerging *during* the process of work, whereas others were more likely to copy ideas or seek help.[329] Although all three participants opted to undertake DIY *broadly* following a *design*-then-*doing* progression, various levels of bricolage-style practice and technique revealed a more amateur than professional process.

[328] The value of improvisation for *set-breaking* was introduced in section 3.5
[329] For example, Lotus looked at examples of Japanese gardens to pick out elements she wanted to include in her project, including a bamboo bird scarer.

It might be too ambitious to conclude that the more specific the experience with a process, the less able you are to deviate from it, however, the realm of bricoleur seemed more accessible to the participants who took a more explorative, possibly amateur, approach to the process.

Vision, tools and co-creation



Vision and ideation

Fleetwood was the least likely of the case study participants to adopt a bricolage style of practice due mainly to his architectural training,[330] his knowledge of the building industry and market preferences also limited his willingness to experiment with design. Fleetwood considered his home a commodity, discussing his proposals in terms of "adding market value" or appeal, aiming to "provide a blank canvas", and develop a "series of spaces and a set of elements", and "safe options". When asked about interior decoration colour preference, most non-design participants selected natural colours (brown/cream), but designers all favoured pale colours (white/grey). Many homeowners have gravitated towards the *blank canvas* aesthetic, mirroring the popularity of off-white interiors in images of new or *designer* homes. When his house began to resemble the magazine-style designer home towards the end of the case study, Fleetwood was adamant *an architectural look* was not something he specifically aimed to create:

> Design ideation can be seen as a matter of generating, developing and communicating ideas, where 'idea' is understood as a basic element of

[330] Although personality, individual creativity and confidence were also of influence.

> thought that can be either visual, concrete or abstract. As such it is an essential part of the design process. (Jonson, 2005, p. 613)

Fleetwood detail treatment was as market oriented as the open plan layout of the interior. Although square set or shadow line junctions between ceiling and walls are a more complex and hence expensive detail than the standard cornice detail, Fleetwood prioritised *the look* over the ease of installation or the cost (Figure 4.51). Making this choice of junction, together with the added complexity of the floating ceilings with up lighting, marking the difference between having a vision, say a new ceiling, and the pursuit of a design idea.

Figure 4.51: Fleetwood's feature shadow line and floating ceiling detail

Jasper, as a designer, would also have preferred a shadow line junction when he was replacing the veranda ceilings in his house, but given the ceiling was sloping and the rest of the house had traditional cornices he felt the additional time, effort and cost made that option inappropriate. Jasper had installed normal cornices previously, but neither of the participants had worked with a shadow line feature. In making a choice on the aesthetics of the junction, Jasper deferred to the type he had experience *doing* well, and Fleetwood remained with the type he had been *designing* with at work.

In terms of design activity within the project timeline, as previously noted, for Fleetwood it was a single event during the process, for Lotus it was a two-stage process—started by her but completed by designers she commissioned. For Jasper it was an iterative process and occurred as multiple diverse events; a pattern revealed more when looking at the roles he took on during a sample project. In

exploring the nature of these design events to see how closely they follow or diverge from the most likely professional approach a conventional project, Fleetwood, as the designer and client, had rolled the concept and design development into one exercise:

QUOTE PARTICIPANT CONVERSATIONS

Fleetwood: I don't do a style I've worked with what's here and made the best of that… You've got to work with what's there otherwise you might as well knock it down, but I don't design from a stylized point of view. I work with materials and the language of the way the materials work together. I would have started here with the timber floors… You have to use what's there and build on that.

Pollywaffle: Your decisions on finishes? You've chosen not to have cornices and put in floating ceilings with lights above. Those are beyond basic build solutions.

Fleetwood: You've got to do a detail there. If you just have a bulkhead it looks shit. It's solving the problem and, yeah, then giving it a little bit extra.

Pollywaffle: How did you start?

Fleetwood: I didn't think the whole process through; I knocked one wall out to start with and I got quite excited about it, and I just – then I started looking at what I could do with the place and then I got obsessed with it... But I think being an architect and doing it as a living you kind of feel to a certain extent you are going to be judged on what you produce... I don't think I was chasing perfection I just want something that is excellent... It is part of me now, it represents who I am. It is a representation of what I can do with an old house.

Fleetwood concentrated on design criteria rather than build priorities. The dividing walls were *novel* rather than practical; floating sculptural elements, one pillar including a recessed key nook, light and detailed plaster edging features; a straightforward DIY build solution would be much less complex. Fleetwood's design background enabled him to visualise and incorporate bespoke features, in addition to solving aesthetic and functional problems. Having already touched on the expectations both Jasper and Fleetwood had about their own high standards in building work, the shadow lines and feature walls also prioritised design over build ability, especially for Fleetwood who talked about his reputation and being "in the game".

Jasper also talked about the pressure of his "own professional pride" and how it "wears you down", concerned the outcome would be judged by professional not

amateur standards, especially by friends who are designers. The assumption being that an amateur or non-designer would have less refined or specific expectations about particular aesthetic and practical issues. For Fleetwood more than Jasper, the domain specific design training and experience prevented him from exploring something new, untried or untested, his opinions and expectations formed over years in an office working with peers. By the time he started renovating he had a suite of architectural features and details he liked and incorporated. Furthermore, his architectural preferences dominated his decision-making as a client and homeowner, such as the strong desire to have a floating ceiling and shadow line when in fact neither was essential to the improvement of the property.

Both Jasper and Fleetwood generally took a more cautious approach to the design aspect of their projects focusing on clarity before action. With the exception of the more rash demolition or "just starting" occasions, both the designers tended to spend a great deal of time thinking the design through. Lotus on the other hand, a non-designer, was "prepared to have a go", not worrying too much about the outcome but enjoying the creative process. To Lotus, an essential part of this process was to do with what she had *to hand*, believing "the less you have the more creative and resourceful you have to be".

Of all the participants, it is Lotus who demonstrated the most intriguing method of ideation. Although Fleetwood and Jasper mostly relied on their skills as designers, and the tools they were most familiar with, software programmes such as Photoshop and AutoCAD and sketching on paper, Lotus became a bricoleur, developing a collage in order to visualise what she wanted, as explored in the next section.

Design tools

The research activity was, for Lotus, the most manageable aspect of the design process, enthusiastically gathering together ideas from books on Japanese gardens and magazines. Lotus sorted the paperwork into categories and when she ran out

of staples, secured pages with needlework pins that were *to hand* (Figure 4.52). The file of photocopies was subsequently used to brief the garden designer who then created a plan, a step towards making the ideas real.

At the beginning of the case study, Lotus had the landscape plan, but did not know how to *read* it, much less implement it. Her experience working with plans had been limited to two exercises. A few years earlier her and her husband attended evening classes to learn how to redesign their garden (Figure 4.52). They chose a Mediterranean theme and, with the aid of the teacher, drew up a rough layout on squared paper before changing the garden.

The second foray into *reading* a plan came when Lotus organised verge re-planting on behalf of the body corporate for the block of units where she now lived. Having been given a consultant's planting plan to follow, typically with shrubs indicated at planting centres, she found she could not visualise what it would look like just from the circles and names. To interpret the design she photocopied images of the plants listed, cut out circles at the same size as the shrubs were indicated on the plan, traced the plan onto some spare computer paper she had to hand, and stuck the photocopy circles on over the proposed planting locations (Figure 4.53). Having worked out a way to visualise the plants and their associations as a collage of images, she was planning to use the technique again to read the plan done for her own Zen garden.

This *low tech* photocopy, cut and paste on paper collage method is not something either Jasper or Fleetwood would have considered, given the current suite of digital equipment they have access to in their work environments.[331] Jasper or Fleetwood typically used other methods to help them visualise and communicate information, such as creating design documentation plans, sketching by hand, making models, and producing graphics via software such as AutoCAD and Photoshop. Although

[331] For example, digital cameras, computers, scanners and large format printers are basics in most professional design offices. Of this list, Lotus only has a computer, and had no experience with graphic programmes or plant names.

drawing and sketching can also be considered as low tech as the paper collage, software packages enabled Jasper in particular to produce a more sophisticated version of the *cut and paste* exercise.

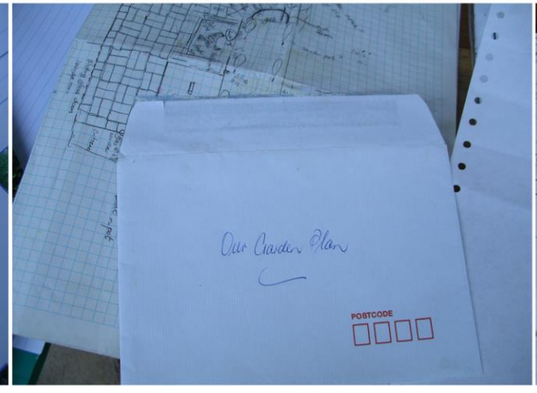
In terms of visualisation, one of the most revealing parts of the survey was the drawing exercise, where participants were asked to draw plans of both current and childhood homes. When asked to draw a plan of his current house Fleetwood inserted a computer drawing showing the property *at completion* (Figure 4.54). The layout includes imagined furniture to scale and proposed planting using standard software pictogram-style symbols. The resulting computer generated drawing while impersonal and crowded, reinforced Fleetwood's belief that people cannot read spaces without stuff in them; "people go 'well it's just a series of rooms', they can't see … you've gotta put the crap in it for people to see it."

The current house plan drawn by Lotus also indicated the future state of the garden, writing "Zen Garden (to be)" and indicating the proposed curve to the currently straight paving edge. Although Lotus was embarrassed about her "lack of ability" when it comes to drawing, especially the proportions, her sketching style with tentative strokes and handwriting is more charismatic and personalised than the computer plan. Even though standard plan conventions such as scale and formal labels are missing, the plan is legible and informative; blending plan *and* elevation, and it communicates the key elements of Lotus' home clearly.

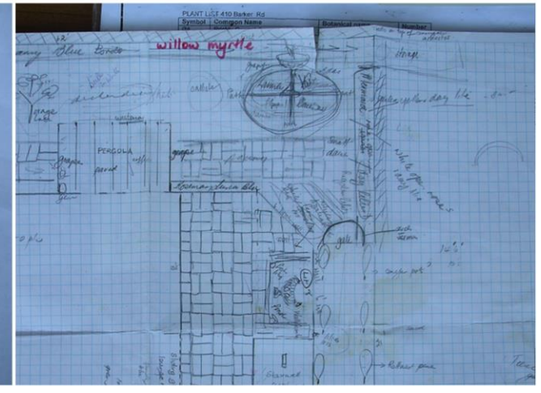
In sketching their childhood home, Lotus and Fleetwood followed a similar style to their current home sketch, allowing for further comparisons between the participants, one a designer and one non-designer (Figure 4.54). Although Fleetwood's was a hand drawn layout it was almost as crisp, impersonal, restrained and elemental as the computer plan, demonstrating the confident strokes of someone used to working with sketching, the "tool that helps them [designers] to think" (Cross, 2006, p. 34). Lotus produced another free-hand drawing, which, in contrast to Fleetwood's computer plan was again relatively *low tech*, but no less relevant than other tools that facilitate design representation.

A. LOTUS WITH FOLDER OF RESEARCH MATERIAL: PHOTOCOPIES, PRINTED LISTS, IMAGES, HAND-WRITTEN NOTES (2010-2011). GATHERING AND CONSOLIDATION OF IDEAS AND INFORMATION DURING PLANNING STAGE.

B. DRESSMAKER’S PIN USED TO SECURE PAPERS DIVIDED INTO CATEGORIES. ORGANISATION OF MATERIAL USING THE CLOSEST THING TO HAND.

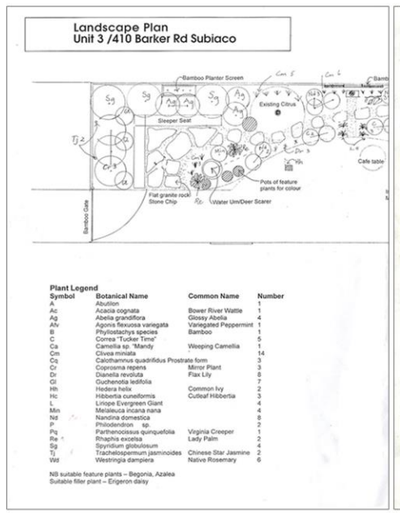


C. ENVELOPE TITLED “OUR GARDEN PLAN” CONTAINING SKETCHES COMPLETED AT EVENING CLASS (2006). TRANSFERRING A VISION TO PAPER, STORED IN AN ENVELOPE AWAITING ACTION.

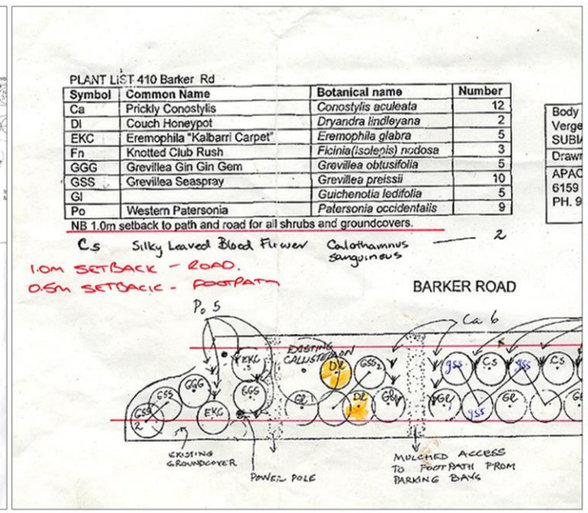


D. HAND-DRAWN PLAN ON SQUARED PAPER TITLED ‘THE MEDITERRANEAN GARDEN’ (2006). MUCH OF PLAN LATER CREATED IN THE GARDEN BY LOTUS AND HER HUSBAND.

Figure 4.52:
Lotus’ documentation of past and current garden projects



A. EXTRACT FROM COMMISSIONED GARDEN PLAN (2009). LOTUS SUBSEQUENLTY UNABLE TO ‘READ’ THE PLAN AND IMAGINE HOW THE PLANTS WOULD LOOK.



B. EXTRACT FROM SKETCH LANDSCAPE PLAN PREPARED BY OTHERS FOR UNIT BLOCK VERGE (2009). IN ORDER TO HELP ACTION THE PLAN, LOTUS NEEDED TO RESEARCH WHAT EACH OF THE PLANTS LISTED WOULD LOOK LIKE AND HOW LARGE THEY WOULD GROW.

C. COLLAGE INTERPRETATION (BY LOTUS) OF THE VERGE PLANTING PLAN (2009). CIRCLES AT SAME SIZE AS PLAN SYMBOLS WERE CUT FROM COLOUR IMAGES AND STUCK OVER A HAND-DRAWN COPY OF THE PLAN TO ‘SEE’ THE PLANTS IWITH THEIR PROPOSED PLACEMENT

D. DETAIL OF COLLAGE WITH CUT-OUT CIRCLES FROM PHOTOCOPIES - MOSTLY CHOOSING THE FLOWER PART OF THE IMAGE (2009).

Figure 4.53:
Lotus’ collage interpretation of planting plans by others

SURVEY QUESTIONS H1 AND H2 COMPARED

(Lotus P001a - non-designer and Fleetwood P007b - designer)

LOTUS

PARTICIPANT P001a:

Current home (Survey question H1)
Location: Subiaco, WA
Drawing: By hand
Tool: Pencil
Labels: Lower case script (hand), detailed,
Context: Surrounding areas, context

Character/texture of place:
"asbestos purple fence", "entrance tiled"
"retractable clothes line", "purple wall"
"brick wall", "brick pavers"
"table 2 chairs" (with pictogram)

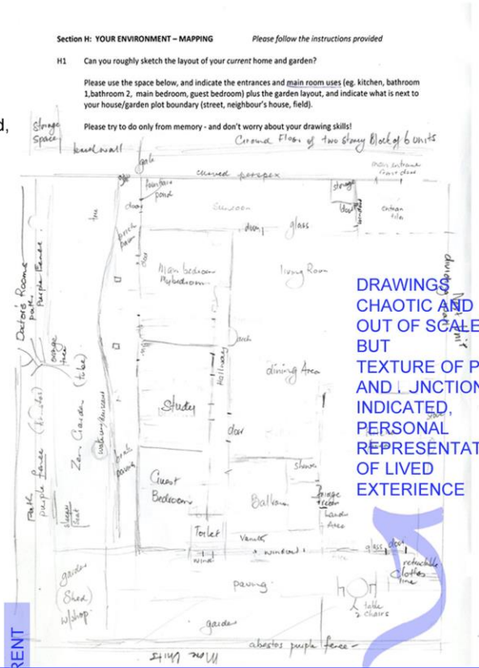
Spatial relations:
"Main bedroom - my bedroom"
"Guest Bedroom"

Future projects/imagined :
"Zen Garden (to be)"

Detailed landscape:
"Water urn/deerstalker"
"Orange tree" (with pictogram)
Sleeper seat

Context:
"Doctor's Rooms"
"Ground floor of two storey block of 6 units"

Interior details, suggested use:
"glass door", hallway", "vanity",
"fridge", "stove"



DRAWINGS CHAOTIC AND OUT OF SCALE BUT TEXTURE OF PLACE AND JUNCTIONS INDICATED, PERSONAL REPRESENTATION OF LIVED EXTERIENCE

CURRENT

CHILDHOOD

PARTICIPANT P001a:

Childhood home (Survey question H2)
Location: WA (rural)
Drawing: By hand
Tool: Pencil
Labels: Lower case script (hand), detailed
Context: Surrounding areas, context

Sites of activity identified:
"wood heap" "vegetable garden" "cubby"

Socio-cultural relations:
"Green grazing - Mounsey's dairy"
"More trotters - Carney's property"

Specific sense of place:
"Bradford Street", "Canning River"
"Gravel Road - Liege Street"

Family/spatial relations:
"Dad's garage/packing shed"
"My bedroom - shared with sister"
"My garden - grow water violets from the river"

Historical/intergeneration relations:
"Orchard/My grandfather's property and my father's childhood home"

Descriptive, textured landscape:
"Hydrangeas, fuschias"
"Fig tree" (with pictogram), "Quince tree"
"Lawn and larkspurs"
"Roses, poppies"

Materials detailed:
"polished boards", "iron bed"

SKILL
Drawings sketchy, not to scale, elevations suggested (colour/pictorgrams) Communicates fundamentals about social relations, rituals.

COMMENT
High sensitivity to landscape quality suggests nature of place important to drawer. Use of rooms and activities suggested. Textural informatio provided (materials). Sense of lived experience in both places

NON-DESIGNER

DESIGNER

FLEETWOOD

Minimal context:
"neighbours", "rear duplex"

Spatial relations:
"bed 1", "bed 2", bath 1"

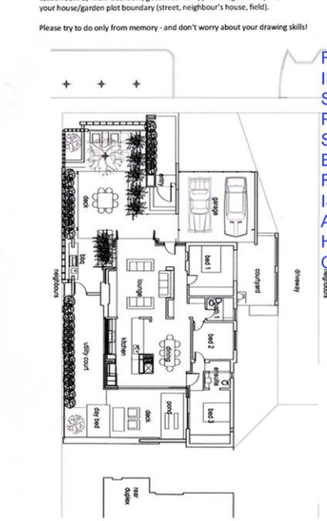
Basic area demarkation:
"utility court", "deck", "courtyard"

Interior details, suggested use:
"kitchen", "dining" (with cirulation area established)

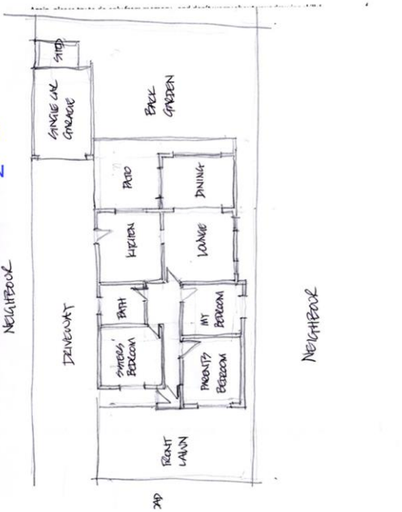
Symbolic landscape
Planting, furniture, cars and doorways all indicated in symbols to scale

PARTICIPANT P007b:

Current / future home (Survey question H1)
Location: Claremont, WA
Drawing: By computer, printed and glued on
Tool: AutoCAD
Labels: Lower case (computer), minimal
Context: Boundaries only



FUNCTIONAL INFORMATION. SCALED AND PROPORTIONED, SPACES DEFINED BUT REPRESENTATION IS IMPERSONAL AND DEVOID OF HUMAN OCCUPATION



PARTICIPANT P007b:

Childhood home (Survey question H2)
Location: Kent, UK
Drawing: By hand on plain paper, glued on
Tool: Pencil layout, black ink labels
Labels: Upper case print (hand), minimal
Context: Boundaries only

Minimal context:
"Neighbour", "Road"

Family/spatial relations:
"Sister's bedroom"
"Parents bedroom"
"My bedroom"

Basic area demarkation:
"Back Garden"
"Front Lawn"

SKILL
Drawings to scale and in proportion
Functional and spatial design
Communicates fundamentals about building and site

COMMENT
No sensitivity to landscape quality (CAD symbols)
Use of rooms defined and fixed (furniture placement)
No detailed social relations
Current drawn as if finished
No sense of lived experience in either place

Figure 4.54:
Design tools (drawing) compared

Designers are often trained sketch as a way of working through ideas that extend from a brief, as a way to make their thoughts visible and editable. Fleetwood kept very few of the development sketches leading to the computer image plan of the house, treating his *thinking out loud* sketches as disposable, in the way project paperwork is kept to a minimum in a design office. He talked about the need to do hand sketch on paper early on and kept an A3 pad under his keyboard "to scribble on", but still does most of his final resolution on the computer. Using both computer software and pen/paper as tools *for designing*, Fleetwood, unlike Jasper,[332] claimed being able to resolve his design 100% in a virtual mode before going on site. Jasper resolved issues during the build process, combining design and doing as the task progressed, frequently used materials to hand as sketching surfaces, including off cuts of materials, container lids and white space in any printed matter nearby (Figure 4.55).

Figure 4.55: Examples of Jasper's sketches on materials to hand

[332] At the time of writing this thesis, Jasper has designed and is building a new house. The design and detailing has continually evolved even as the building work progresses on site. In other words, Jasper continues to work as a hybrid practitioner employing bricolage practice.

Co-creation

A key differentiation between *pro* and *am* practices is the application of different roles, such as who takes on the *design/creative* role, who takes on the *management* role. In professional practice, such as with architecture, the individual or practice has a clearly defined role linked to a series of responsibilities and expectations. A scope of services is agreed between the consultants and client so that both parties are clear about what will be produced by when. The responsibilities may extend to dealing with people not party to the contract, such as local authorities.

By comparison DIY, as an amateur design-build practice, rarely begins with a defined scope of works, set roles or responsibilities. The *am* processes and roles are usually ill defined, elastic and blended, as previously noted in relation to the process taken by Jasper and Lotus. Further, for DIYers, the process of DIY has been found to be less about working in isolation and more about collaboration, both with others and with non-human tools and materials, doing it *with*/DIW. Yet DIY is more than a practice of co-production, it is also a practice of co-creation, with each person involved in the process of change contributing to the creation of value within the home and to home life (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004; Sanders & Stappers, 2008).

DIYers rarely work to or prepare a list of expectations; where household needs and desires are expressed outwardly it is mostly through informal discussion, in contrast to the formality that characterises commercial projects. In his role as architect at work, Fleetwood felt "getting the brief right" was one of the most important aspects of any project and that the skill of an experienced architect's is in "developing the brief and translating the basics", translating it into something that "really inspires them", meaning his client. When asked if his own house inspired him, as a client, his response was lukewarm; after the years of hardship he had no emotional attachment to the house "I thought this house will be mine forever, but it wont be". Not imagining living there for the long term his brief was more objective, to make the best of what was there. Had he build from scratch the he

felt the project would have “been more ambitious”, and his roles as client *and* designer would be more strongly bound together.

Where Fleetwood’s project followed the professional process most closely of all case studies, and this is also true of the role(s) he has adopted throughout. As a professional architect even on his own DIY project, there is little evidence of his improvisation or re-design work once he had begun the build stage, which is quite different to Jasper’s more fluid and iterative process. For Fleetwood, the briefing stage was poorly defined, initially he wanted change and ripped cupboards out, then switched to the role he is accustomed to at work: “Well it is who I am, it is how the world should be in my head.” An architect is how he identifies himself first and foremost “it’s who I am”, but he also reflects on the impact his training has on the way he critiques both his own work and that of others.

Although emphasising the importance the brief in architectural projects, he shows less regard for the role played by his clients. Fleetwood felt there would be no value in learning more about the way his clients currently live as he is commissioned to design a new house “for the way they want to live”:

QUOTE PARTICIPANT CONVERSATIONS

Fleetwood: A lot of the skill for an experienced architect is in developing the brief and translating the basics people come in with into something that really inspires them. You don’t need to see how they live now. It doesn’t need to inform the design, because if they are building new then they will be living differently, they want something different, they don’t want more of what they’ve got.

Another architect, Lexicon, had a quite different sensitivity to his client’s needs. Lexicon firmly believed that knowing how people live and *what* it is that they want to change is vital, rather than wiping the slate clean and providing them with a blank canvas. Lexicon talked about visiting client’s homes on a number of occasions and talking to all members of the family, even children to gain a more complete picture of home life.

Lexicon and Fleetwood, both architects, agree on the inability of most clients to articulate their vision in concrete terms. Most often clients are encouraged to show architects images of houses that inspire them, however most often, according to Lexicon, they are not sure *exactly* what it is about the image that appeals to them. Therefore, when people say they want "space and light", the architect needs to interpret the clients' understanding of those terms and how they could be manifest in built form. Le Corbusier described architecture as "the masterful, correct, and magnificent play of volumes brought together in light" (2007, p. 102), yet non-designers are likely to interpret space and light differently. Fleetwood talked about the *intangible* aspects of architecture that go beyond simply providing the tangible "shopping lists of architectural features" or requirements that clients put together for him:

QUOTE PARTICIPANT CONVERSATIONS

Fleetwood: Architecture is so much more than just the basic needs. There's a question in there about the way if makes you feel. Where you live has got to lift your spirits and that's what people - they don't understand it but they feel it when they walk into a house. They might say a house feels good, but they don't know why. They don't have the vocabulary or the understanding, but that's what sells the house. People spend millions of dollars going from house to house and doing that [desgner ideas] shopping thing, and ticking the boxes ad saying, 'I'll have one of them and one of them', and still don't end up with what they want.

Fleetwood's comment, reinforcing the importance of understanding a person's relationship with their house and behaviour, is at odds with his refusal to learn more about his clients' current patterns of living. A gap in the process opens where clients are unable to adequately describe their vision or *unpick* an image to brief an architect. To address this, a suite of interpretive skills that extend beyond listening to a client's words would be a valuable design-briefing tool. Both ethnographic methods[333] and experimental methods[334] offer appropriate ways for an architect (or

[333] For example, fieldwork, participant observation, semi-structured interviews and surveys.
[334] For example, cultural probes, reflective journals, visualisation techniques and video diaries, such as the daily journal completed by Jasper over a month long period, refer section 4.4.

designer) to gain a more thorough briefing. This would seem especially applicable for renovations and extensions of existing homes where clients are dissatisfied with their homes/lives but may not be able to articulate *why*.

Although magazine images provided helpful indications of a client's taste and preference, Fleetwood admitted "I hate design shoppers", people who come in with lots of images and want him to replicate specific parts of them stuck together in a single building, collage-style: "You cannot design with a bunch of isolated bits… I just tell them to go and buy it—go to a draughtsman or mass homebuilder and just get them to cut and paste. The skill is in interpretation not copying. Design is about composition." People without design training, such as Lotus, or without the budget to commission a professional design service, have to seek alternative ways to put "isolated bits" they like together, essentially with a DIY approach their only option is to cut and paste. This is, no doubt, why television programmes, magazines, on-line guides and show homes are popular, they show people volumes of isolated bits, they provide how to examples, they assist amateurs or non-designers in the creation of domestic space. In other words, the media rather than architecture directly informs homeowner decisions on aesthetics, form and function in DIY practice. The influence of media, friends and family, together with personal experience and motivation[335] are seen to co-create the home space, and ultimately influence lifestyle.

Working with creativity/creative roles

Jasper came the closest to working through the briefing and design process in a more collaborative way with another person than anyone else in the case study. There were many occasions when he and his partner would both sit together sketching ideas and discussing their requirements, and the input of two different people created a diverse but common basis of understanding. The roles of client and designer became entwined, and entangled with the role of builder. For most couples reflecting on their DIY experiences during the course of interviews, the brief

[335] To encompass issues explored in relation to skill and competence, and the ability to envisage and communicate ideas then realise ideas.

development as well as the execution of the work was always a collaborative activity.

Even where roles are combined in one practitioner, designer and client, or designer and client and builder, as they are for all the participants in the case study, collaborative relationships with others' have made an important contribution to the progress of work. For any individual *in the game*, doing renovation work, regardless of whether they are earning a living from it (pro) or doing it for leisure (am), building relationships with others is vital. The complex nature of the design and build activity is reflected in the formation of a community linked by a network of rules and regulations, information, supply and demand/market forces. The case study participants, no matter how competent and self-sufficient in their role as client or designer or builder (or all three), still required the input of tradesmen, retailers, suppliers, friends, family and acquaintances in order to make decisions on actions or aesthetics and to complete tasks or projects.

A timeline comparison between Lotus' small single project and Fleetwood's major project revealed significant differences with the input of others supplementing their own activity (Figure 4.56). The timelines charted approximate points at which various *others* help out with the project—mostly on site, although this excluded many of the retailers and suppliers visited by the participants during the course of the work as these were too numerous to identify in the format shown.[336] Importantly, as clients, the participants also, to a greater or lesser extent, retained control of making decisions on how something looked or functioned, often the realm of a designer.

DIY projects, having *less restrictive structure* than conventional projects, provide a much greater opportunity for a change of creative direction as the work progresses, usually without creating onerous financial penalties. Jasper's projects

[336] Had the participants listed *all* the people they asked for advice/information or purchased supplies or materials from, it would have been possible to map a wider influence of *others* in relation to collaborative practice and/or consumption.

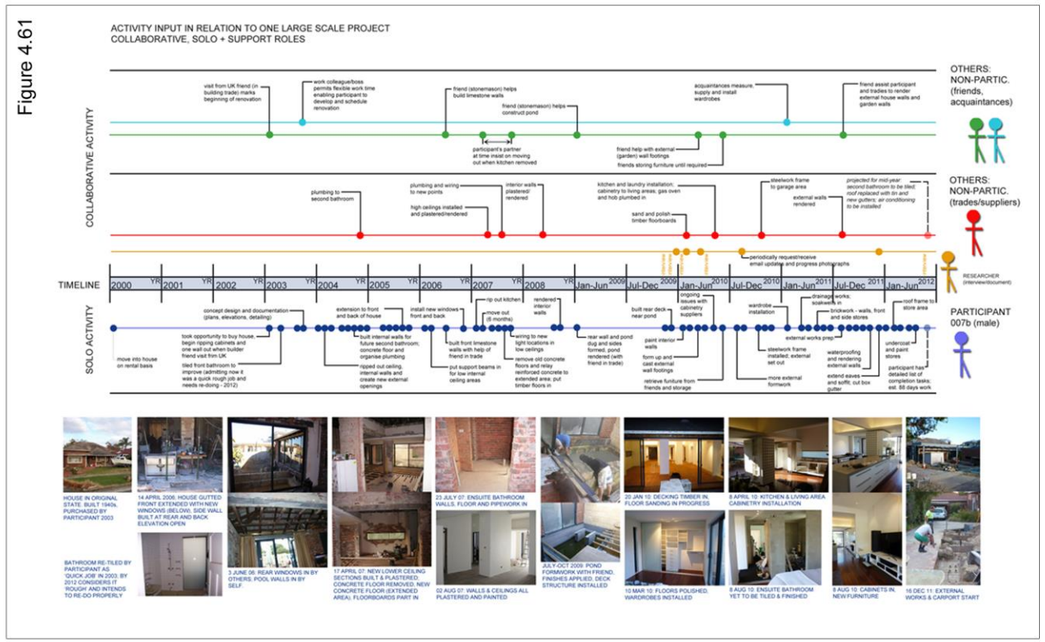
CASE STUDY PROJECTS - DIVISION OF LABOUR COMPARED

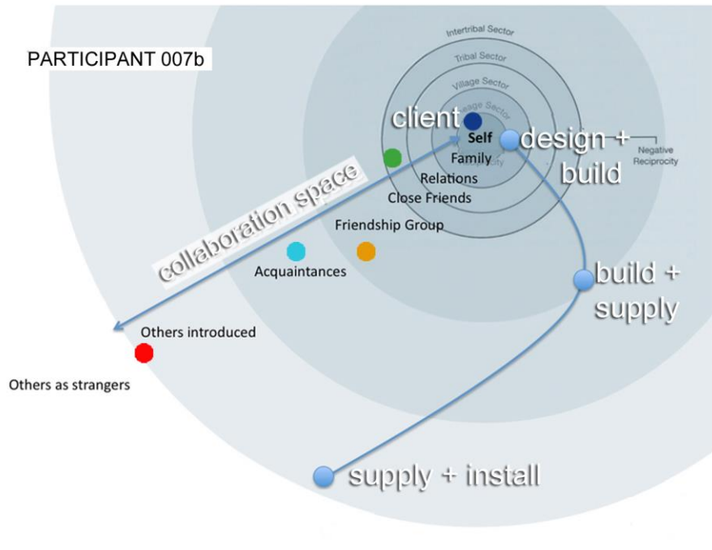
(Lotus P001a - non-designer and Fleetwood P007b - designer)

FLEETWOOD

PARTICIPANT 007b (designer)

Figure 4.61

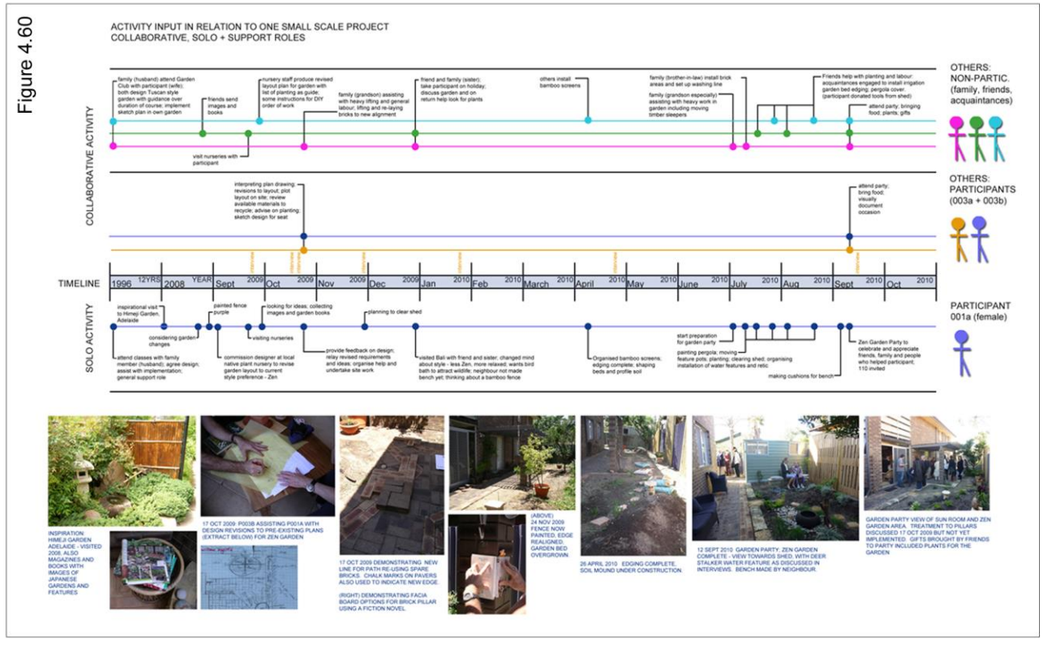




LOTUS

PARTICIPANT 001a (non-designer)

Figure 4.60



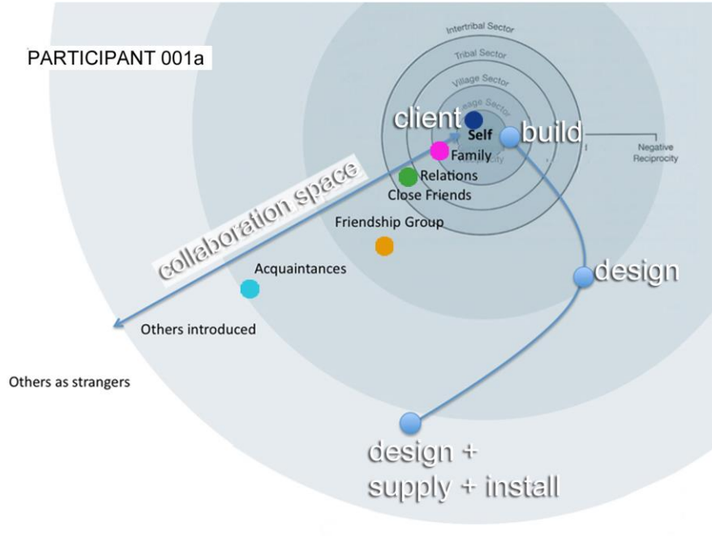


Figure 4.56:
Comparison of individual and collaborative roles

demonstrated a great deal of iteration; projects were started on the spur of the moment and changed direction a number of times, sometimes led by design preferences, sometimes led by building experience, sometimes by his partner's creative ideas or practical suggestions (Figure 4.62). Lotus was able to change her mind after the design work had been done and before building her garden, a creative change brought on by budget and energy constraints, ideas from books and the informal input of friends with design training (Jasper and Pollywaffle).

What emerged from Lotus' engagement of a design consultant, and Fleetwood's interviews, was the lack of understanding about what might be happening in their client's lives, or anticipation of what they might go through in implementing their plan. Where design consultants are involved with renovation work this seems a significant omission given that a person's home environment is their sanctuary and for most, the centre of all things stabile and permanent in their lives about to undergo change. According to participants who have experienced the upheaval, designed and co-coordinated by others, it was a traumatic and intrusive undertaking.

Fleetwood and Jasper both agree the total renovation of a house while living in it can be enormously stressful, even where they the designers *and* project managers (i.e. in control). However, DIY allows room for a project to evolve, or go on hold, as different priorities or issues surface. Although taking on all roles (wearing all hats) allows a DIYer to change their mind at any time, it can be harder to make final decisions or commit to a single course of action. Like many DIYers, these participants, in spite of their design training, did not realise the amount of energy and discipline required to keep the schedule, budget and resources under control.

Much of the stress involved in DIY, according to at least five couples who undertook renovation early in their married lives, is the lack of expertise across all roles taken on, with major gaps in both design skills and specialised construction work. Although Jasper and Fleetwood were competent designers, neither of them had worked as self-employed builders before, nor managed this type of project,

although according to Fleetwood “any architect work this salt should be able to build what he has designed”. What this comment disregards, however, is the length of time and type of training required to reach an *adequate* level of competence. DIY primarily embraces practical skills that are relatively easy to acquire or not controlled by legislation/licensing such as electrical work. Given the time take to train as an architect, and gain experience, it is the role of designer that is the most overlooked in the DIY process. Although creativity has been identified as a human trait, the specific technical knowledge and design skill that separates architects from other trades or professions is missing from most DIY projects. Here, while software programmes[337] and lifestyle television, books and magazines lend design *advice*, missing is input addressing site and behaviour specificity—only gained in collaboration with those in the *architectural* game, thus a strong argument for co-design practices.

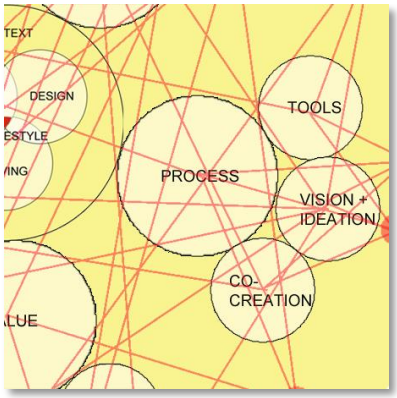
Ultimately the job description and scope of work for a DIYer is self-formulated and in flux; he/she is not only a *jack of all trades* or at lease some, but also a designer and client, plus occasionally a shopper, courier, financier and domestic negotiator. Often these roles are separated or ordered in a linear process, with design, theoretically, completed before build work commences, one *hat* exchanged for another. Mostly, however, the role of designer is absent from DIY, and instead, the individual, couple or group employ creative techniques to explore the opportunities presented by their project. Copying, adapting, improvising, inventing, appropriating, cut and paste, collage and bricolage are all aspects of creative practice that have been identified at work in the case study projects, and reflected in narratives of participants during guided tours of homes and photographic albums (section 3.5).

The alternative role emerging from the findings is that of the *hybrid practitioner*, someone who moves between or works across multiple roles, often without even

[337] Domino and Scooter, desperate for ideas but reluctant to pay for the services of an architect, bought a software programme promoted as a DIY-design tool. Ultimately they realised it did not address circulation or structural issues, and was limited to *their* ideas which they felt were too unimaginative.

being aware of the conventional boundaries they are breaching or blending. The different roles work together in a type of co-creation, defined by Sanders as "any act of collective creativity" (2008, p. 16) between two or more people, but also in this case, where creativity emerges through the interplay between two or more roles and across conventional and alternate processes.

Connecting design with dream shaping



Co-design

Where co-creation suggests blended roles and inclusion of creative techniques, co-design is considered to be "the creativity of designers and people not trained in design working together in the design development process" (Sanders & Stappers, 2008, p. 16). There is nothing new in the repositioning of users or consumers, or in this case clients, from passive to active contributors in the design process, with terms such as user-centred approach, participatory design and lead-user innovation having broadened the landscape of design research (von Hippel, 2005). However, to date, the role of designers in the *domestic* built environment, as opposed to those involved with large-scale complex industrial or commercial projects, remains mostly a traditional, restrictive, highly specialised consultancy based form of practice. Traditional disciplines continue to leave gaps in the emerging landscape where designing "for people's needs or societal needs … require[s] a different approach" (Sanders & Stappers, 2008, p. 7), especially in the multilayered context of people's home lives, the subject of this study (Figure 4.57).

Also missing from DIY, as a way of shaping lifestyle and the entanglement of human needs, is the bespoke vision professionals bring to their clients, *rather* than the adoption of generic design from secondary sources or everyday creativity prevalent in the home improvement projects of many non-design participants. Architectural offices rarely if ever work *with* individual homeowners on DIY projects although individual designers sometimes assist friends with home improvements.[338] Although commercially some design offices engage in public projects with high levels of stakeholder consultation, often on a relatively ad-hoc *pro bono* basis, there is little done to "expand the limited role of the profession in communities" (Brigham, 2009, i) with respect to broader social and cultural obligations.

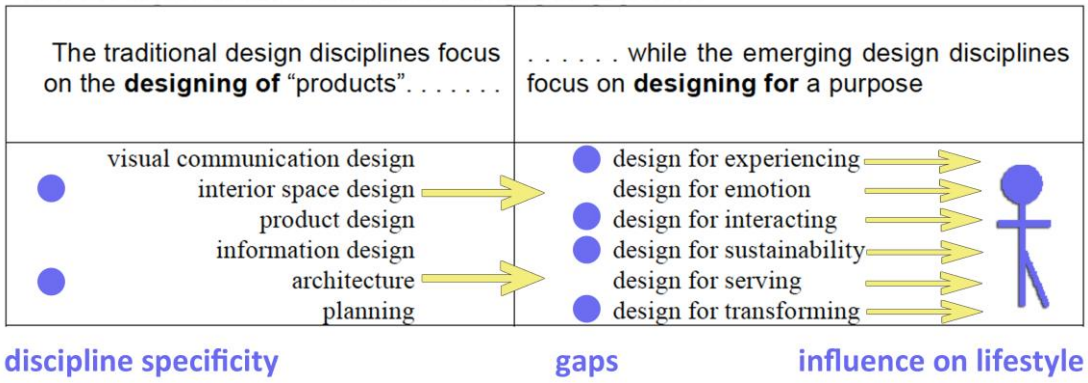


Figure 4.57: Traditional and emerging design practices

Case study findings helped determine how successful three different participants were blending professional design process with their building work. Fleetwood and Jasper applied their design skills both consciously and unconsciously, throughout their projects, with Jasper embracing creative practice where specific technical knowledge was missing. Lotus commissioned design services then applied her innate creativity to interpret a professional garden design plan that she could not *read*. Similarly, Fleetwood spoke of clients who made changes after the work started on site, as they did not fully comprehend the lines on a plan until they could walk around them. The difficulty for non-designers in fully understanding conventional design outputs appears to reside in the tools and language used for

[338] For example, participant Lexicon has provided design advice to a number of friends, not least participants Jasper, Paperbark, Riverdale and Signal and Seaspray.

communication, and in the ability of the designer to provide the client with a three-dimensional working model during, not after, the briefing process. Furthermore, Fleetwood revealed he, as a designer, dissociated with the client's way of living, thus potentially unable to fully grasp the implications of the change-making process on their everyday lives. It is possible that important narratives are missing from the client brief. Beyond asking questions or looking at images a client has collected, designers are unable to or chose not to dig deeper into the ethnographic landscape of the domestic home, often due to time or cost constraints.

In commercial terms, designers gather the information that is readily available, formulate a brief based on their experience and discussion with a client, and provide a scheme to satisfy all stakeholders, including builders, planners and neighbours (Figure 3.23). Everything else is beyond the basic scope of works, and dependent on the sensitivity of the individual designer. On one hand, architect Lexicon was deeply interested in how people live in their current home and he worked extensively on renovations. On the other, Fleetwood was not interested in clients' daily negotiations with a home they will leave, designing only new homes. However, even moving into a new home, people transfer their tastes, rituals, and clutter-making habits with them even if those are the very things they seek escape from, as discussed in section 4.2.

As a result of renovating his own home, rather than acknowledge a greater understanding of being a client and the upheaval to patterns of living, Fleetwood focused mostly on the construction knowledge he had gained, giving him greater confidence for dealing with builders at work. The experience taught him to "take a more simplified approach" to design, such as developing details he knew could be built so he could supervise contractors more closely, but Fleetwood remained adamant he would not work on renovations and would not supply design services to DIY-ers:

QUOTE PARTICIPANT CONVERSATIONS

Pollywaffle: So has this experience added value to your professional work as an architect?
Fleetwood: Ah, yes, I think it probably has. It has taught me to make it really simple. Anything is doable, it depends on how much money you want to spend. They are tradesmen out there not craftsmen.
Pollywaffle: Has it changed the way you think about design?
Fleetwood: Just reinforced it - it was going that way... I definitely learn't more about the process [of building], which helps you ask questions. You know how close to the end of wood you can nail before it splits ... what really good brickwork is, not just pretty but that the perps are full, and so on.

To Fleetwood, if a client wanted to take on the role of builder they should obtain a license to be an *owner builder*, possibly engaging contractors, and "work through" their own design issues, without suggesting how. As an architect he knew his training added value to build projects, including his own renovation, and yet dismissed the gap left without such expertise: "That's the big difference here, between me and most DIYers I would have thought. It is cause I am trained to do this kind of work."

With all commissions an architect has to cross the dreamscape, connecting the client's imagined lifestyle and with a constructed form, and generating this future scenario relies heavily on understanding the client's relationship with the house, with current patterns of living and foundations laid by past experiences. The architects interviewed in this study, with the exception of Lexicon, felt their current scope of work could not facilitate an in depth exploration of client needs, relying instead on a brief. Thus there is room for greater appreciation of the relationship between buildings and human behaviour, space for architects to be come more involved, and potential for co-design practice:[339]

> If one is trying to design to accommodate anticipated behavior … if we are to apprehend a building's everyday character (as opposed to its character for the tourist's gaze), then we need to understand it by way of the habits of everyday life. (Ballantyne, 2011, p. 48)

[339] As quoted, the 'tourist gaze' can be interpreted as that of media audiences on the lives of 'others', portrayed through media images of ideal homes and lifestyles, that are, on closer investigation merely a simulacrum of real life (Urry, 2002).

In this study, design process has revolved around conscious design input, but also acknowledges the contribution of individual creativity. It has been identified as a process that "draws people together … providing places to slow down processes towards *reflection-in-action* creates small openings for transformation" (Gunn & Donovan, 2012a, p. 7). It is a process that has potential to embrace not only the professional's skill and ability to initiate then develop and communicate concepts, but also to improvise and adapt and/or combine ideas gleaned, for example, from glossy magazines, to suit the individual, the home environment and the desired lifestyle.

Design connectivity

The mapping of data gathered from designers and non-designers in the cohort, and personal experience as a design professional, has revealed omissions and opportunities for design, such as with issues of connectivity, renewl and personal growth:

> Lyle incites regenerative designers to 'be concerned with interactions among parts, the connections, as with the parts themselves' … building is not an exercise in imposing one's solitary vision and will in an object, but rather a set of practices resulting in entanglements. (Vannini & Taggart, 2013a, p. 3)

Although links have been made between all threads through notions of home and lifestyle, the thread *design* extends beyond process to encompass design tools, vision and ideation skills and to co-design activity (rather than co-creation), all of which are found to facilitate connections with the fields of knowledge underutilised by designers.

The design insight map (Figure 4.58) takes these fields into account and broadly highlights the gaps in current design application as revealed by the study. The traditional realm of designers (red) broadly indentifies with Amabile's domain specificity and *functional fixedness*, whereas other fields (yellow) give rise to creative-specific skills that can deliver a *set-breaking* influence. The *complex field of lived experience* (yellow) incorporates both the vast landscape of issues

encompassed by place and practice issues observed in the field,[340] and acknowledges the complexity of human behaviour and lived experience, still largely untapped by designers who operate with increasing specialisation.

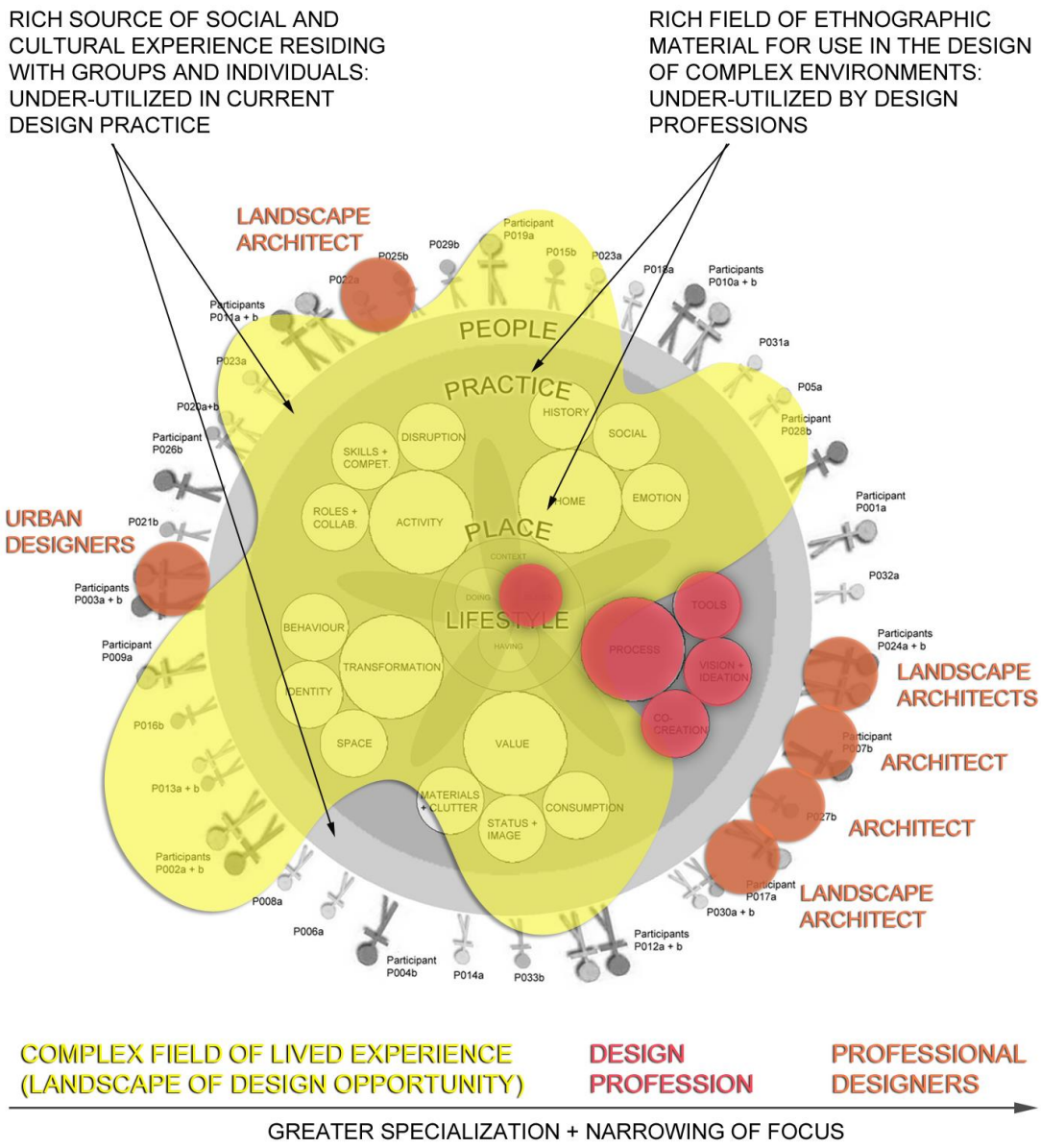


Figure 4.58: Design insight map – highlighting gaps in design application

Having briefly looked at the roles people adopt as they make changes to their homes, varying from homeowner to client, visionary to consumer, and designer to

[340] This knowledge traditionally resides in domains other than design, hence advocating other theoretical approaches, such as DA, to provide valuable insights on design and use practices.

builder, it is important to determine how these roles fit with people's real and anticipated *ways of living*. In order to contextualise the interface between roles, skills, processes and context as seen previously, the following section, considers the connections between the threads, and the collage of people, place and practice that results in the generation and modification of lifestyles.

4.7 Collaborations

The survey, interview and case study findings, once mapped against the inquiry concept, created a complex and interconnected field of issues dominated by the dream tracery; the connective tissue that both supports and connects, or separates, the thread planes and elements. Mapping the connections between threads revealed the extent of cultural and social *glue* between participants as friends or relations and members of a community as their relationships were constructed and modified through sharing activities, lives, homes and dreams.

Living with transformation

Lifestyle remains at the core of the composite research map (Figure 4.59), occupying the space where issues come together as a collage of *people*, *practice* and *place* under constant transformation. This represents the conceptual 'space of lifestyle'[341] within the context of this research study, a space of *connections* and *collaborations*. The collage is created and modified by the lived experience, perceptions, needs and desires of the participants in the study, collaborators in the research.

Missing from the graphic representation of the research inquiry at this stage and yet discussed throughout as DIY projects are seen to combine process and practice, is one of the key dimensions of transformation—that of time, and with it, inevitably, the sequence of change. Case study project timelines demonstrate the considerable length of time participants were involved with their projects,

[341] Bourdieu refers to 'conditions of existence', practiced and judgements of taste in this space (1984), bearing strong similarities between life choice and life chance (Appendix 6).

extending before and after periods of direct building activity. Even when the participants are not engaged in practical work, they were found making creative or design decisions, researching, shopping or sourcing materials.

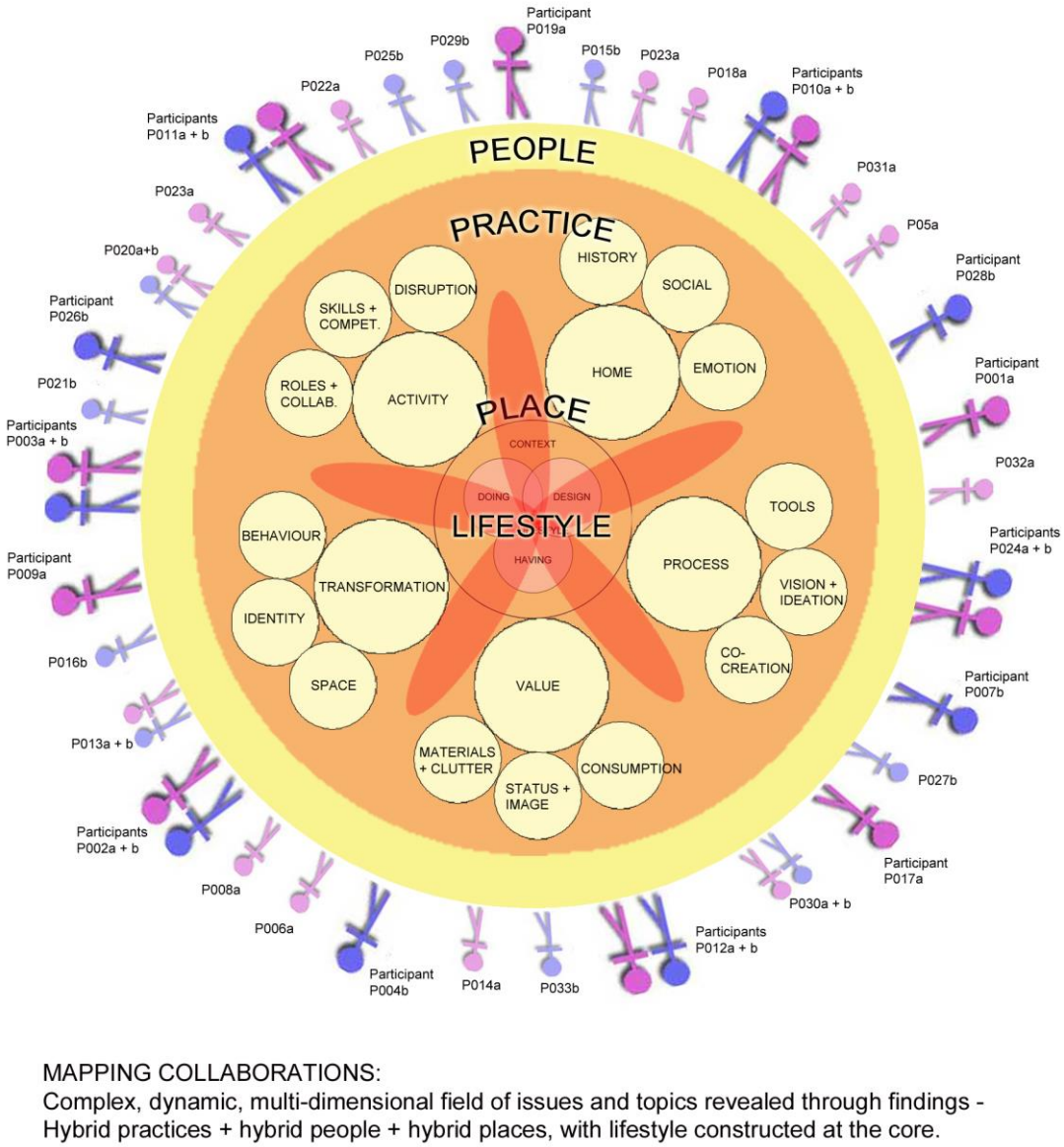


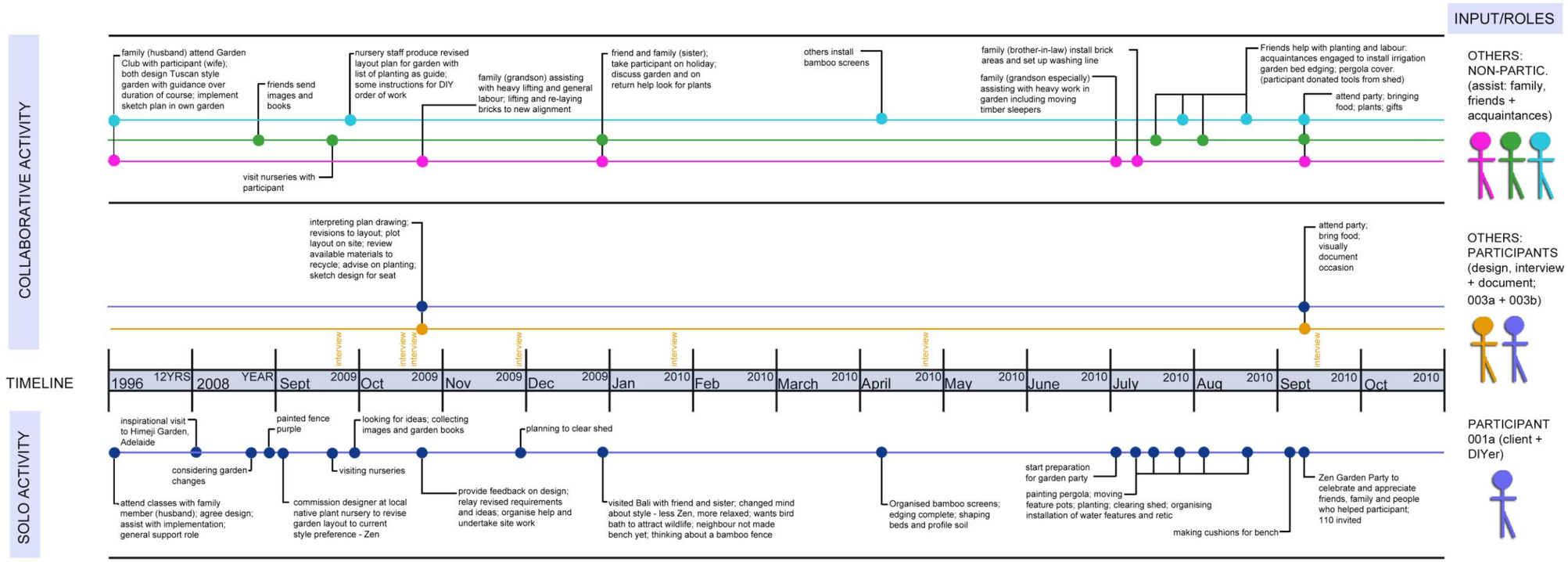
Figure 4.59: The space of lifestyle constructed from layers of practice, place and people

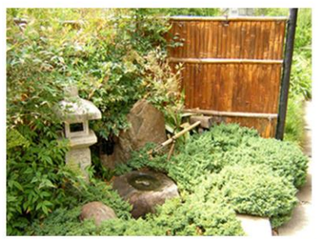
The period of immersion was sporadic for Lotus (Figure 4.60), total but finite for Fleetwood (Figure 4.61), and intermittent and ongoing for Jasper (Figure 4.62). However, participants spoke of feeling mentally and/or physically engaged with their project from the moment the idea surfaces, the project becoming an integral part of their lifestyle. The lived experience accumulated through the

ACTIVITY INPUT IN RELATION TO ONE SMALL SCALE PROJECT
COLLABORATIVE, SOLO + SUPPORT ROLES

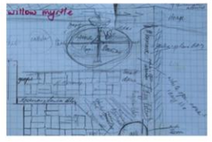
LOTUS

SPORADIC IMMERSION IN DIY ACTIVITY




INSPIRATION: HIMEJI GARDEN ADELAIDE - VISITED 2008. ALSO MAGAZINES AND BOOKS WITH IMAGES OF JAPANESE GARDENS AND FEATURES


17 OCT 2009: P003B ASSISTING P001A WITH DESIGN REVISIONS TO PRE-EXISTING PLANS (EXTRACT BELOW) FOR ZEN GARDEN




17 OCT 2009 DEMONSTRATING NEW LINE FOR PATH RE-USING SPARE BRICKS. CHALK MARKS ON PAVERS ALSO USED TO INDICATE NEW EDGE.

(RIGHT) DEMONSTRATING FACIA BOARD OPTIONS FOR BRICK PILLAR USING A FICTION NOVEL.


(ABOVE) 24 NOV 2009 FENCE NOW PAINTED, EDGE REALIGNED, GARDEN BED OVERGROWN.


26 APRIL 2010 EDGING COMPLETE, SOIL MOUND UNDER CONSTRUCTION.


12 SEPT 2010 GARDEN PARTY; ZEN GARDEN COMPLETE - VIEW TOWARDS SHED, WITH DEER STALKER WATER FEATURE AS DISCUSSED IN INTERVIEWS. BENCH MADE BY NEIGHBOUR.

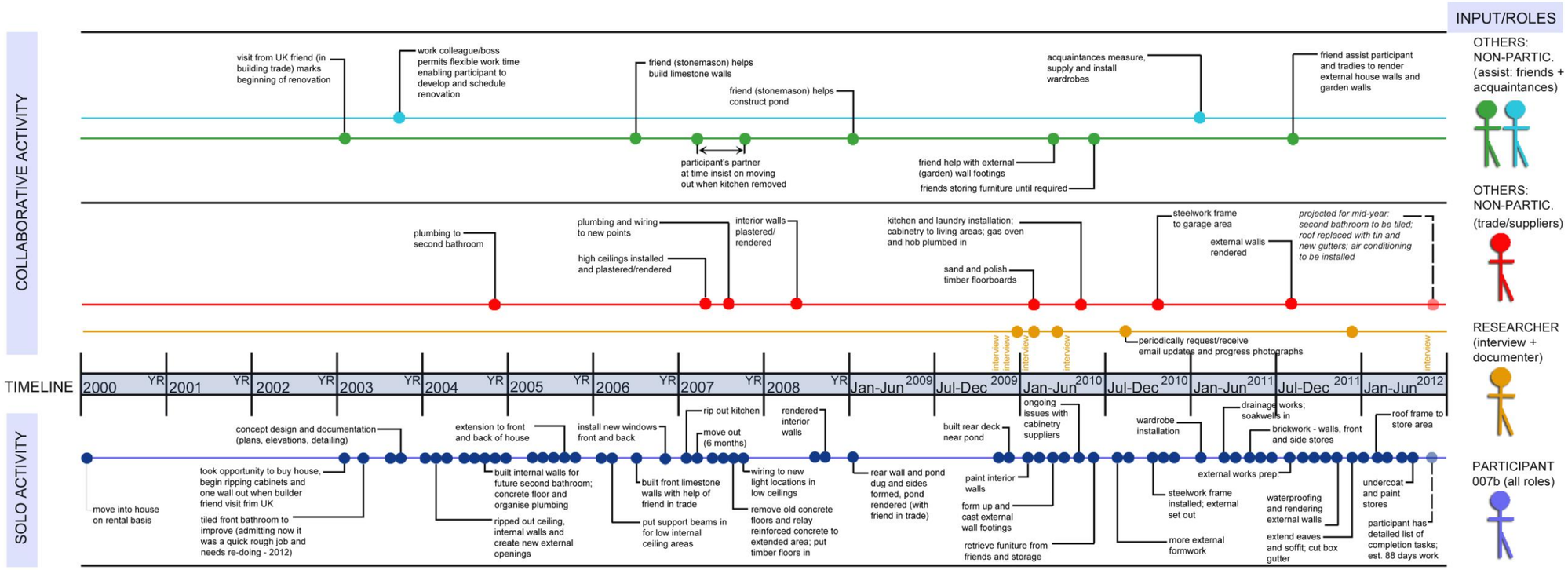

GARDEN PARTY VIEW OF SUN ROOM AND ZEN GARDEN AREA. TREATMENT TO PILLARS DISCUSSED 17 OCT 2009 BUT NOT YET IMPLEMENTED. GIFTS BROUGHT BY FRIENDS TO PARTY INCLUDED PLANTS FOR THE GARDEN

Figure 4.60:
Project timeline for Lotus' Zen garden project

ACTIVITY INPUT IN RELATION TO ONE LARGE SCALE PROJECT
COLLABORATIVE, SOLO + SUPPORT ROLES IDENTIFIED

TOTAL AND FINITE DIY ACTIVITY

FLEETWOOD



HOUSE IN ORIGINAL STATE. BUILT 1940s, PURCHASED BY PARTICIPANT 2003

14 APRIL 2006; HOUSE GUTTED FRONT EXTENDED WITH NEW WINDOWS (BELOW), SIDE WALL BUILT AT REAR AND BACK ELEVATION OPEN

BATHROOM RE-TILED BY PARTICIPANT AS 'QUICK JOB' IN 2003; BY 2012 CONSIDERS IT 'ROUGH' AND INTENDS TO RE-DO PROPERLY

3 JUNE 06: REAR WINDOWS IN BY OTHERS; POOL WALLS IN BY SELF.

17 APRIL 07: NEW LOWER CEILING SECTIONS BUILT & PLASTERED; CONCRETE FLOOR REMOVED, NEW CONCRETE FLOOR (EXTENDED AREA), FLOORBOARDS PART IN

23 JULY 07: ENSUITE BATHROOM WALLS, FLOOR AND PIPEWORK IN

02 AUG 07: WALLS & CEILINGS ALL PLASTERED AND PAINTED

JULY-OCT 2009: POND FORMWORK WITH FRIEND, FINISHES APPLIED, DECK STRUCTURE INSTALLED

20 JAN 10: DECKING TIMBER IN, FLOOR SANDING IN PROGRESS

10 MAR 10: FLOORS POLISHED, WARDROBES INSTALLED

8 APRIL 10: KITCHEN & LIVING AREA CABINETRY INSTALLATION

8 AUG 10: ENSUITE BATHROOM YET TO BE TILED & FINISHED

8 AUG 10: CABINETS IN, NEW FURNITURE

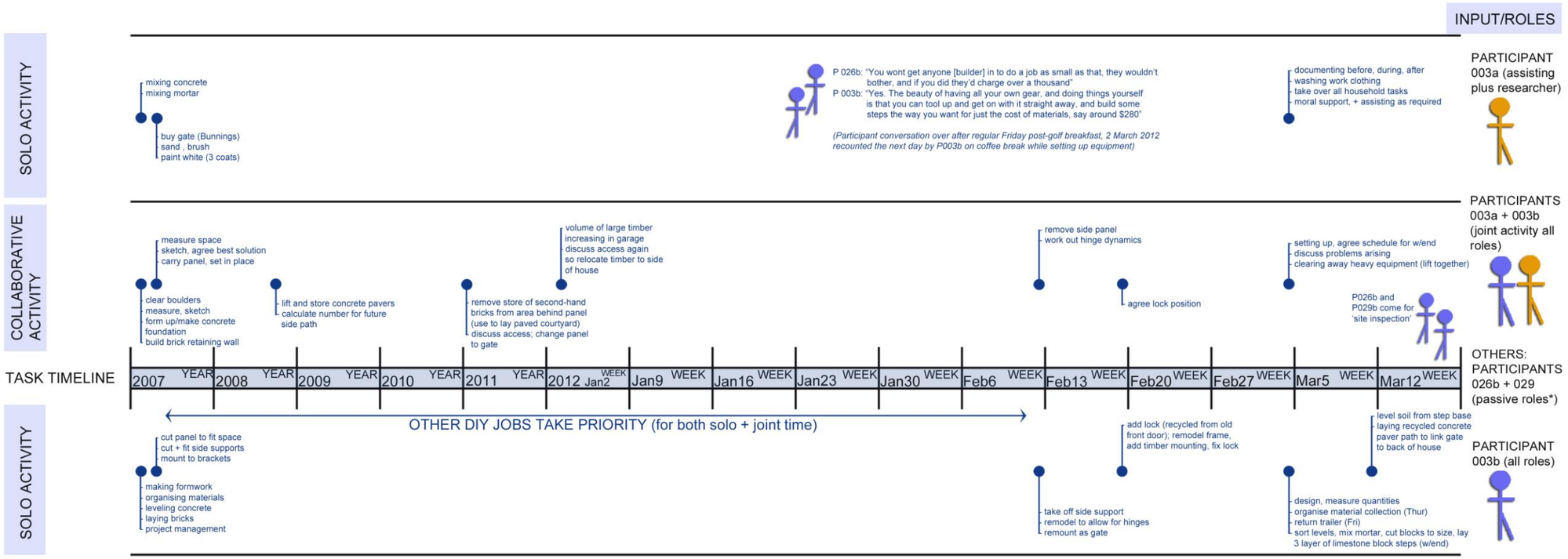
16 DEC 11: EXTERNAL WORKS & CARPORT START

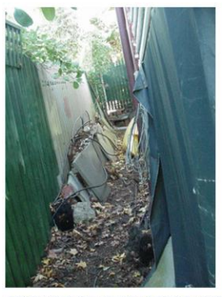
Figure 4.61:
Project timeline for Fleetwood's house renovation

ACTIVITY INPUT IN RELATION TO ONE SMALL SCALE PROJECT
COLLABORATIVE, SOLO + SUPPORT ROLES IDENTIFIED

INTERMITTENT AND ONGOING DIY ACTIVITY

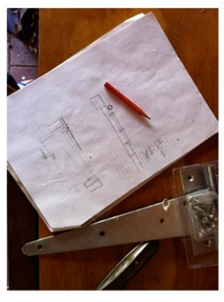
JASPER



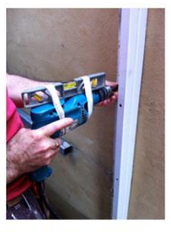


SOUTH SIDE OF HOUSE UNDER PREVIOUS OWNERSHIP - PHOTO TAKEN 4 MARCH 2004 BY REAL ESTATE AGENT BEFORE SALE. ASBESTOS FENCE TO BOUNDARY LATER REPLACED WITH HIGH BLOCK WALL BY NEW NEIGHBOURS.

BRICKS RETRIEVED FROM FRIEND'S HOUSE IN 2006, STORED ALONG SOUTH SIDE, LATER USED FOR PAVED COURTYARD, LAID FEB 2011. CONCRETE SLABS TAKEN UP FROM COURTYARD AREA TO BE RE-LAID BACK ALONG SOUTH SIDE AS ACCESS PATHWAY



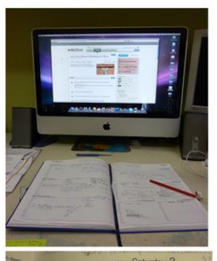
SKETCH TO DISCUSS + RESOLVE HINGE LOCATION, SCRAPS OF TIMBER USED TO MODEL POSSIBLE ARRANGEMENTS BEFORE FIXING 4 FEB 2012



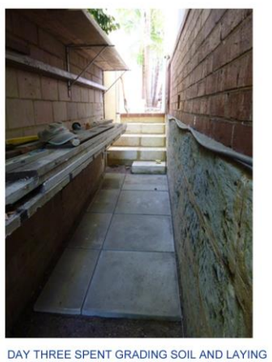
DRILLING HOUSING FOR GATE LOCK. SPIRIT LEVEL FIXED TO DRILL WITH MASKING TAPE (FROM DRAWING OFFICE) TO ENSURE 90 DEGREE ANGLE TO SUPPORT MAINTAINED. 17 FEB 2012

MIXER SET UP, MATERIALS COLLECTED, READY TO BEGIN SETTING FIRST LIMESTONE BLOCKS AT BASE OF STEPS. 3 MAR 12

DOUBLE CHECK MORTAR MIX RATIO ON INTERNETBEFORE START, SKETCH SECTION IN DIARY TO DISCUSS WHAT DOING WITH PARTNER - LAST MINUTE DECIDE NEED MORE FILL TO ACCOUNT FOR SLOPE, SO RATHER THAN BUY MORE, RECYCLE OLD BLOCKS KEPT AS SPARE FROM LAST PROJECT.



SOUTH SIDE WITH RETAINING WALL, GATE, NEW RENDERED BOUNDARY WALL+ TIMBER ON STORAGE BRACKETS. NEW BLOCKS CUT AND STACKED CLOSE TO SITE ON DAY ONE. DAY TWO - STEPS LAYED AND JOINTED WITH PALE MORTAR. 4 MARCH 2012



DAY THREE SPENT GRADING SOIL AND LAYING SPARE PAVERS AS PATHWAY. 5 MARCH 2012

* Note: Passive role indicated by reversed person symbol

Figure 4.62:
Project timeline for Jasper's side access upgrade

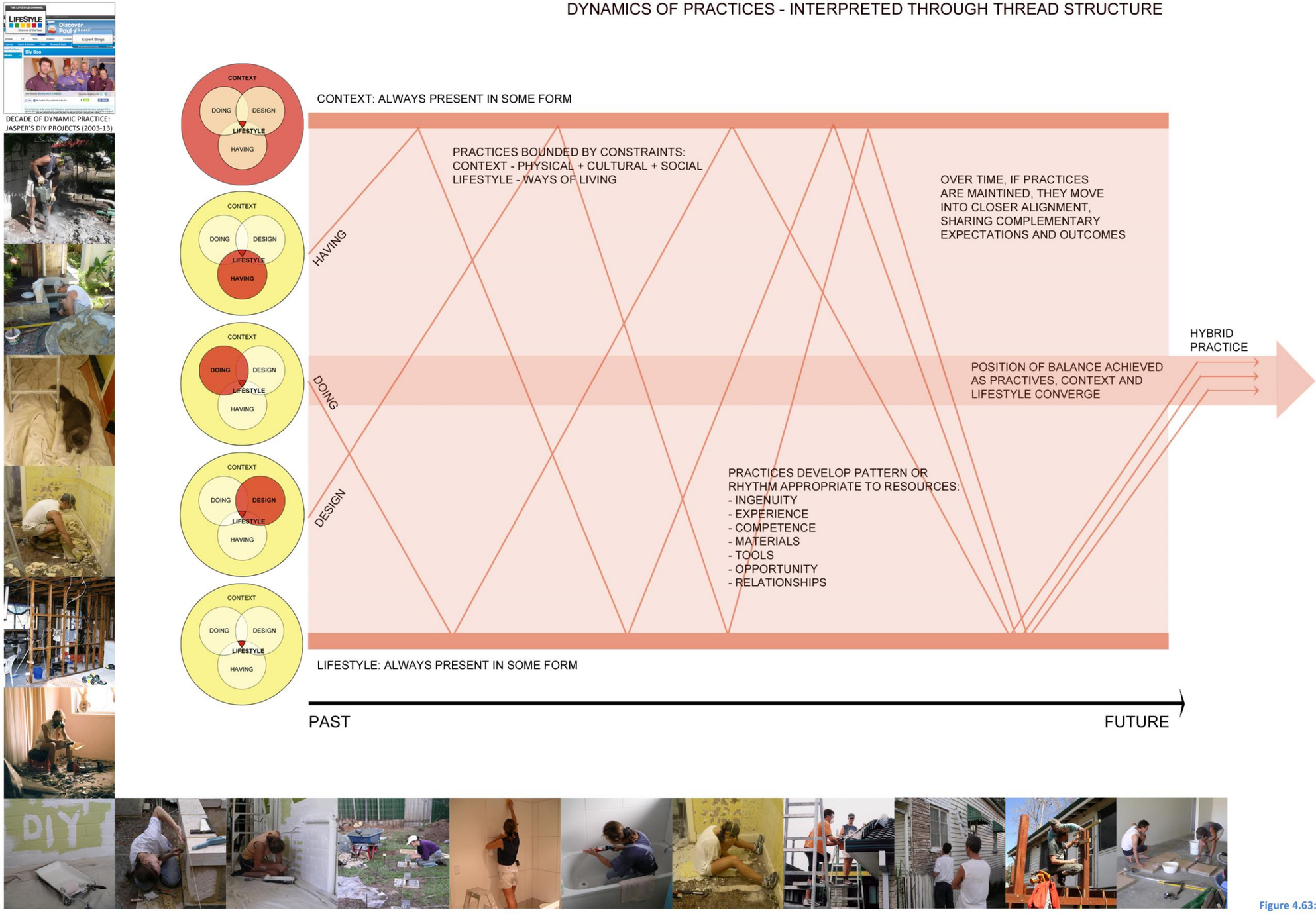


Figure 4.63:
Dynamics of practices - thread focus

transformation of home and self continues forward shaping the future; just as participants modified their way of living, their lives shifted to inhabit the new physical place and personal space.

Hybrid ways of living

The project timelines also reveal the entanglement of people, roles and tasks over time, together with the skills, knowledge, use of tools and materials implicit in carrying out the work tackled at each site of DIY. Detailed analysis of the programme and structure of each DIY project(s) uncovered interplay of design, client and builder role(s), both those of the individual as well as the role(s) adopted by others as collaborators. The social context of projects was as important as the physical activity of making change, so too the departures from commercial build practice through improvisation, appropriation, recycling, up cycling and experimentation.

The blending of roles, practices and contexts emerging as patterns of relationships in this case study are the *identifiable signs* of lifestyle under formation and renewal; echoing the notion of translation and hybridity. Shove suggests that a human with a hammer is a simple "human-non-human 'hybrid'" (2007, p. 56), where competence is distributed between both tool and person, and neither can operate, say to put a nail into timber, without each other (section 3.5). Extending this, a DIY practitioner is a hybrid of person and tools/materials, together with the systems that both supply and support the activity, such as intentionality and pre-requisites such as knowing *how* to use a tool.

Hybrid practices

The connection between practice and the consumption of materials and tools, according to Shove, has less to do with repeating a past experience and more about projections forward with unrealised practices, "having and doing are still out of synch" (2007, p. 31); the dimension of time and activity/choosing to act *central* to the evolution of practice:

> Present practices are structured by images of the future.… [However] the respondents were not abstractly dreaming … they contemplated quite specific practices. Realization of which required the effective combination of having and doing, or the successful 'management' if the having and going relation. (2007, p. 35)

Shove's model of consumption practice (Figure 3.9) does not adequately account for the dynamic context within which, and upon which, the activities or practices take place, nor the rhythms, habits and patterns of living developed as a way of negotiating daily challenges. Focusing on the case study findings, it was possible to reconfigure the model to include threads and hybrid practice (Figure 4.63).

The design process, embracing the use of enabling tools such as images and the role of creativity, facilitated the journey from past to future. A second model presents an alternative way of considering the interplay of design and use practices, *having* and *doing* with *design*, within the context of human and resource constraints, the threads *lifestyle* and *context* respectively (Figure 4.64).

In both alternative models, Figures 4.63 and 4.64, the three practices are seen to move closer together over time as the *doing* generates and is absorbed into lived experience. Once the *doing* has ceased, the ongoing development of skill or competence is curtailed, but neither the experience nor embedded capability is lost. Therefore, while *doing* is considered to be the core practice of DIY activity, it supports and is supported by *design*/creative practices and *having*/consumption practices.

As experience in all three practices is accrued, either though a self-learning mode, such as trial and error, or through training of some kind,[342] they become more integrated, enabling the practitioner to work in a hybrid mode. The escalation in complexity of projects and range of tasks involved has been observed over Jasper's *career* with DIY. Starting with design skills, over time Jasper became more competent and confident with doing and having practices, but at variance to the

[342] For example, formal or informal apprenticeships, or classes—a number of participants indicated learning building skills at evening or adult education classes in the survey.

balanced situation as suggested by Shove's model (Figure 3.9). Subject to a social and cultural environment under constant change, it is unlikely a position of balance can be achieved or maintained. Achieving an balance that is *optimal*, according to

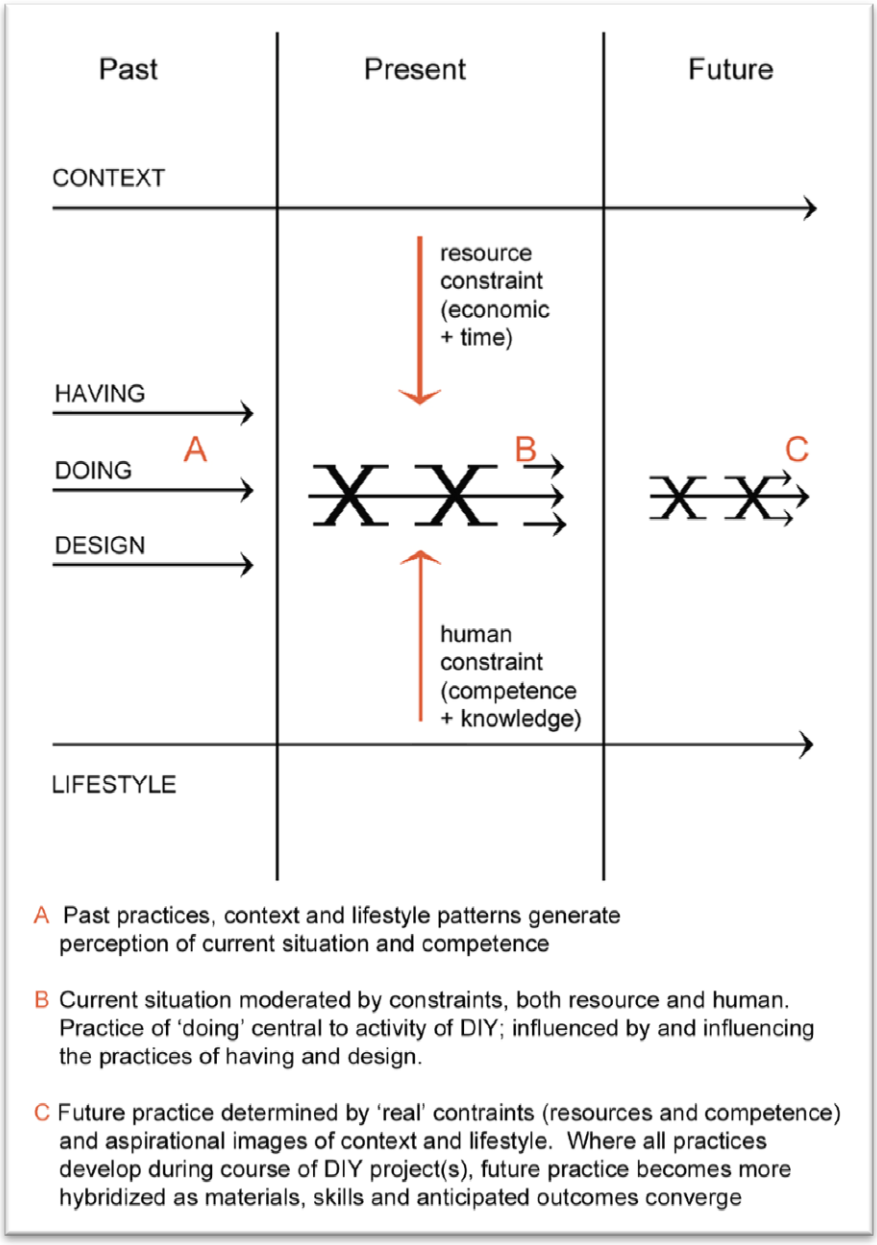


Figure 4.64: Consumption practices – having and doing reconfigured

Karen Hammell, is problematic especially in relation to occupations such as DIY:

> Further, due to age, culture, socioeconomic status or lifestyle, an occupation may be labelled by some people as leisure and by others as productive. Indeed, the perception of a leisure/work dichotomy is not universal, but rather, culturally specific (Primeau, 1996). Moreover, the same individual may define an occupation differently at different times, dependent upon

> mood, goals, context and the presence of other people…. Because the three categories are unstable, establishing an optimal balance among them is problematic. (2004, p. 297)

Further, past experience, current needs or future desire will most often favour one form of practice over another, depending upon the nature of the constraints. Fleetwood's approach to his project was dominated by his design training rendering him inflexible to spontaneity, such as working with donated materials or recycling. He was unable to trust others and therefore leaves himself no option but to take on all roles in his project, yet he does not switch between them comfortably. To be properly hybrid means being able to interchange between roles, open to the cross-fertilisation of skills, sharing tools and knowledge. Lotus demonstrated a partial hybridity of roles at a novice level; she is a creative recycler[343] and finds her own unconventional way of understanding a conventional design plan.

Of the participants, Jasper had the closest integration of skills and roles, as a career DIYer, bricoleur and hybrid practitioner. He worked in a flexible mode, modifying as he went along, engaging with others, maximising opportunities and embracing experiences to learn from others like Emporio, Lexicon, Riot and Paperbark. Projects evolve through bricolage style practice characterised by appropriation and opportunism, occasionally involving his partner Pollywaffle specifically in order to utilise complimentary and often gender based skills.[344]

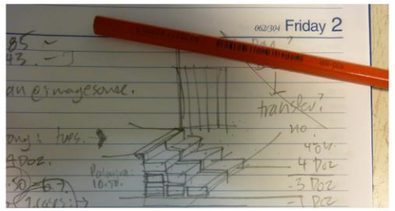
The project timeline for one of Jasper's projects, installing side access steps (Figure 4.65), revealed the parallel relationship of roles adopted by Jasper during the course of a small project; this can be contrasted with the successive roles demonstrated by Fleetwood's project, where he worked through the design before progressing on to construction work. Jasper improvised with tools, techniques and materials during the various stages of work, which, while they were recorded on a linear scale, were iterative and interlinked activities including brief development, having/acquiring, designing and building.

[343] For example, turning her late husband's model railway tracks into artwork.
[344] For example, Pollywaffle like Lotus sew/dress make, using techniques and materials that men do not habitually deal with.

ACTIVITY INPUT IN RELATION TO ONE SMALL SCALE PROJECT
P003b HYBRID ROLES

JASPER

NOTES



Basic stages of this project:

1. Client - access needs resolution, over 1m drop.
2. Designer - measure site dimensions, draw sketch plan options.
3. Client - consider options and timescale.
4. Builder - consider options; skill level,timescale, available equipment and materials.
5. Designer - consider and decide best option given all variables; decide re-use existing stockpile as some materials (bricks) will require more mortar, time and harder to level than stone blocks.
6. Designer - sketch detail up for final calculations based on using stone.
7. Builder - check available materials again, collect new supplies to suppliment existing.
8. Designer - mark up on site, pencil on wall checking levels.
9. Builder - check mortar mixes on line, get out equipment, do preparation work and build.
10. Designer - project manage help from others (P003a).
11. Client - at end of each day checking on progress.
12. Builder - re-assess plan of work each morning.
13. Designer - final evaluation of project.
14. Colleagues/friends - site visit to provide feedback.

INPUT/ROLES

HYBRID ROLES + PRACTICE

PARTICIPANT 003b (all roles)

BUILDER

DESIGNER

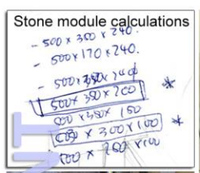
CLIENT

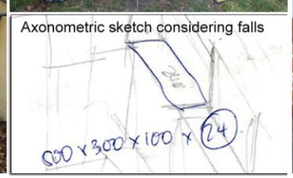
TASK TIMELINE

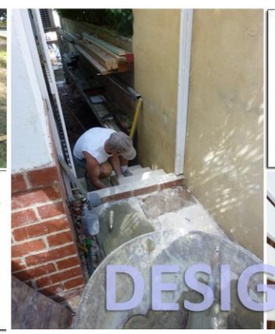
2007 YEAR | 2008 YEAR | 2009 YEAR | 2010 YEAR | 2011 YEAR | 2012 Jan2 WEEK | Jan9 WEEK | Jan16 WEEK | Jan23 WEEK | Jan30 WEEK | Feb6 WEEK | Feb13 WEEK | Feb20 WEEK | Feb27 WEEK | Mar5 WEEK | Mar12 WEEK

MAIN STAGES OF PROJECT

- measure space
- sketch, agree best solution
- carry panel, set in place
- cut panel to fit space
- cut + fit side supports
- mount to brackets
- making formwork
- organising materials
- leveling concrete
- laying bricks
- project management
- clear boulders
- measure, sketch
- form up/make concrete foundation
- build brick retaining wall
- buy gate (Bunnings)
- sand , brush
- paint white (3 coats)
- mixing concrete
- mixing mortar
- lift and store concrete pavers
- calculate number for future side path
- volume of large timber increasing in garage
- discuss access again
- so relocate timber to side of house
- remove store of second-hand bricks from area behind panel (use to lay paved courtyard)
- discuss access; change panel to gate
- remove side panel
- work out hinge dynamics
- take off side support
- remodel to allow for hinges
- remount as gate
- agree lock position
- add lock (recycled from old front door); remodel frame, add timber mounting, fix lock
- setting up, agree schedule for w/end
- discuss problems arising
- clearing away heavy equipment (lift together)
- design, measure quantities
- organise material collection (Thur)
- return trailer (Fri)
- sort levels, mix mortar, cut blocks to size, lay 3 layer of limestone block steps (w/end)
- level soil from step base
- laying recycled concrete paver
- path to link gate to back of house







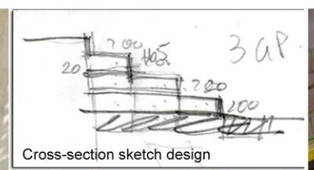
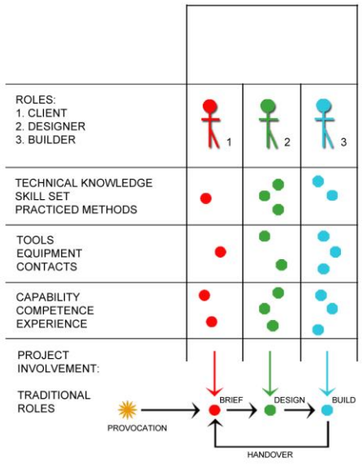


Figure 4.66:
Project timeline - side access upgrade - Jasper's hybrid role

ROLE / PROCESS - SCENARIO 1



Traditional roles and processes:

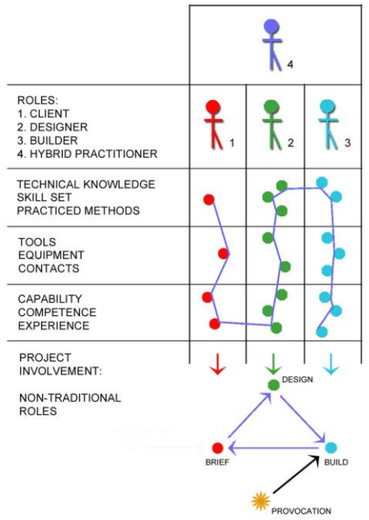
The first scenario sets out the current situation within the building industry. Traditional or conventional roles give rise to a separate scope of service for each stakeholder; the process is relatively linear and the provocation occurs at the inception of the project.

Provocation to begin a project usually originates with the client's dream, desire or ideas about making a change to their lives materialised through a building. The provocation may include essential needs such as requiring more space for a growing family (such as the extension build by participant couples Pesto and Tangent or Diva and Emporio).

KEY:

PROVOCATION

ROLE / PROCESS - SCENARIO 2



Hybrid practitioner introduced:

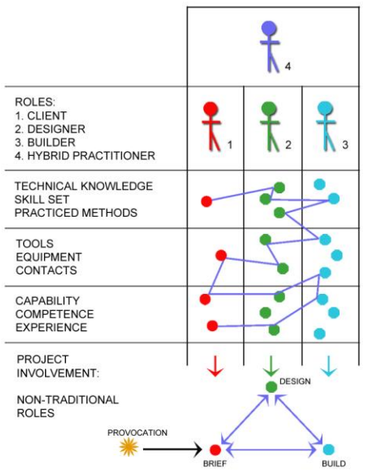
The second scenario introduces a practitioner capable of hybrid practice, however, traditional or conventional roles are followed; the process remains similar to conventional build projects.

The provocation occurs at the inception of the project, here with the destruction of building prior to developing brief (as per Fleetwood's case study project).

KEY:

PROVOCATION
REFER FIGURE 4.69 - INSERT

ROLE / PROCESS - SCENARIO 3



Hybrid practitioner included:

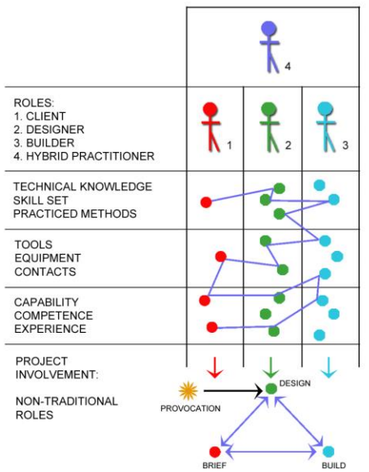
The third scenario maintains a conventional process of inception - provocation at beginning of project before brief is formulated.

Hybrid practitioner present. Roles linked in non-linear process, as hybrid practitioner is able to adopt non-traditional roles, made possible through varied experience and wide skill set (for example, some of Jasper's projects/tasks).

KEY:

PROVOCATION
REFER FIGURE 4.69 - INSERT

ROLE / PROCESS - SCENARIO 4



Provocation changed:

The fourth scenario identifies the inception of a project via a different provocation; one that emerges with/from a design challenge and requires the subsequent development of the brief and build programme.

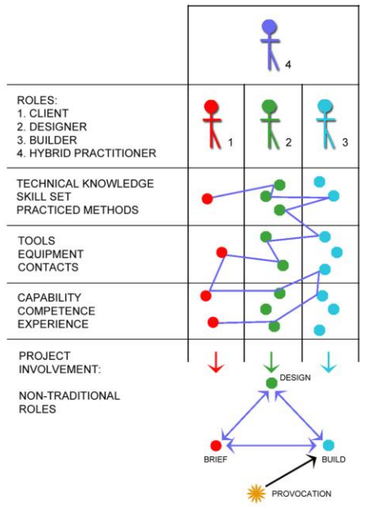
The situation is possible where a non-traditional role has been instigated by hybrid practitioner who has strong background in design training (as observed in aspects of Jasper DIY activity).

KEY:

PROVOCATION
REFER FIGURE 4.69 - INSERT

Figure 4.67:
Roles/process scenarios 1 - 4

ROLE / PROCESS - SCENARIO 5



Alternative provocation:

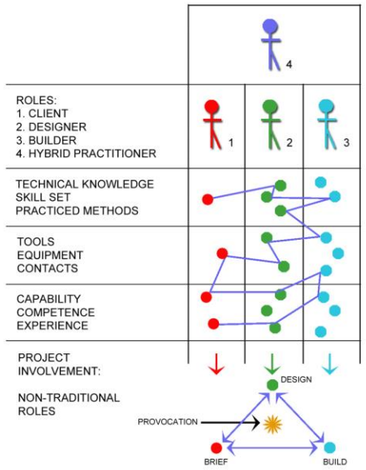
Provocation in this scenario emerges from a build challenge, possibly through destruction of existing environment. The action generates the need to develop a brief and make decisions over the design prior to reconstruction works.

This situation is possible when a non-traditional role is instigated by hybrid practitioner who has stronger background in building work. Also occurs with a practitioner who prefers to get directly into physical activity - to do something (for example with Lotus' garden makeover project – partial representation)

KEY:

PROVOCATION
REFER FIGURE 4.69 - INSERT

ROLE / PROCESS - SCENARIO 6



Continual provocation:

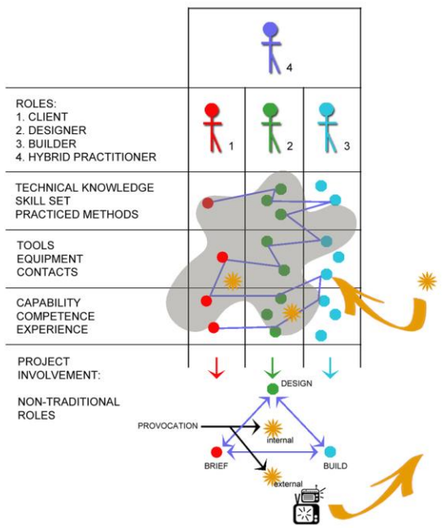
Provocation(s) emerges throughout the process of engaging in a DIY project. Here the practitioner recognizes opportunities for the re-direction of the project as they emerge, utilizing design knowledge, tools and capability, context knowledge and build skills.

This requires a hybrid practitioner with sufficient experience in several types of task and with tools to enable the peron(s) to anticipate more than one possibility for the steps ahead, (a number of changes in course occured during Jasper's projects due to new provocations).

KEY:

PROVOCATION
REFER FIGURE 4.69 - INSERT

ROLE / PROCESS - SCENARIO 7



EXAMPLES OF THREADS:

1 DESIGN
2 CONTEXT (SOCIAL, ECONOMIC, ETC)
3 LIFESTYLE (WAY OF LIVING, REGULAR, EVERYDAY)
4 DOING / DIY
5 HAVING / CONSUMPTION

External and internal provocations:

Provocation(s) originate with practitioner (source: internal to project), emerging through cross-fertilization of competence in different roles, and also from ideas distributed via other sources (external to project) such as magazines or Internet (for example, Paperbark's resource material such as Handyman Magazine).

The individual can be seen to engage in multiple-roles utilizing a wide range of resources through bricolage practice (e.g. Paperbark - DIY work, Jasper – selected projects).

KEY:

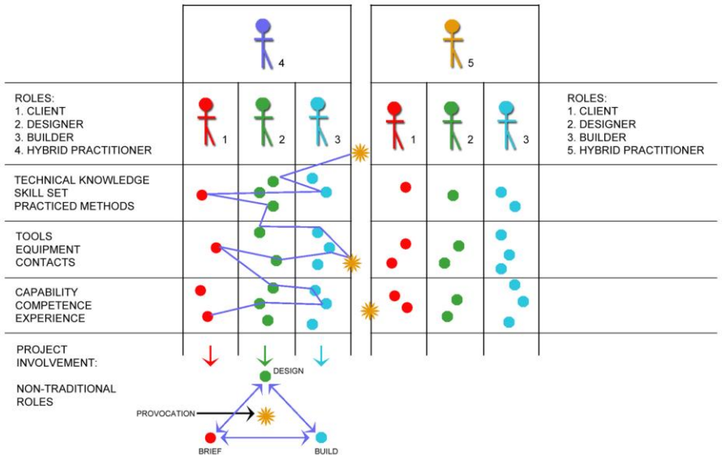
BRICOLAGE PRACTICE THROUGHOUT PROJECT

- ALSO INCLUDES THE USE OF MATERIALS; RECYCLING OR USING SPARE OFF-CUTS TO HAND.
- MATERIALS CAN ALSO ACT AS INTERNAL SOURCES OF PROVOCATION, WHERE PROJECTS ARE STARTED IN ORDER TO USE MATERIALS UP.

PROVOCATION
REFER FIGURE 4.69 - INSERT

Figure 4.68:
Roles/process scenarios 5 - 7

ROLE / PROCESS - SCENARIO 8



Additional practitioner - client role

A second person is introduced to context; the roles extend to include the expertise and experience of another practitioner in an assisting role, and provocations occur due to input of fresh ideas or problems identified during shared communication or project planning.

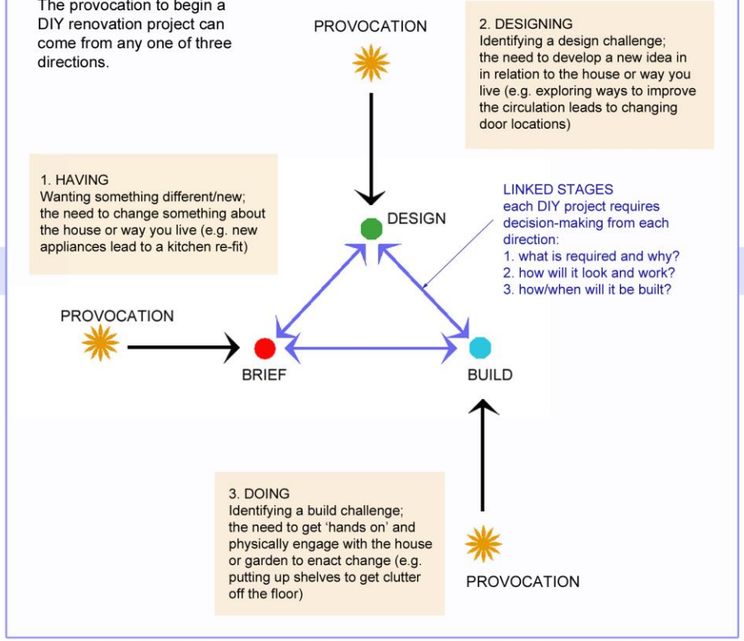
Collaboration limited to decisions made as joint clients (for example Pesto assisting Tangent , or DIva assisting Emporio).

KEY:

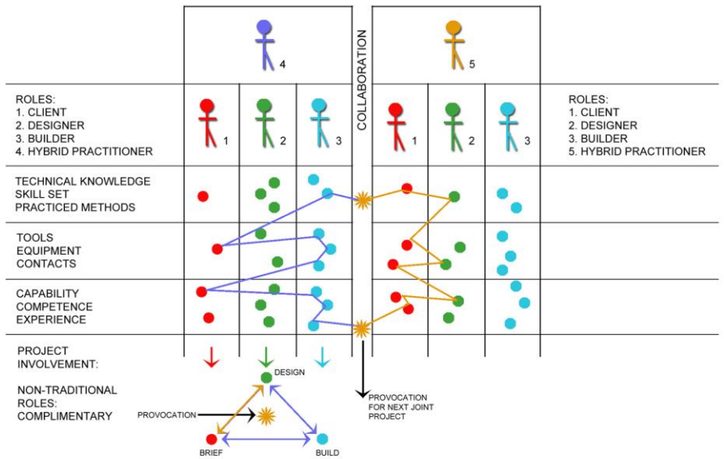
PROVOCATION
REFER FIGURE 4.69 - INSERT

INSERT: PROVOCATION

STARTING DIY PROJECTS:
The provocation to begin a DIY renovation project can come from any one of three directions.



ROLE / PROCESS - SCENARIO 9



KEY:

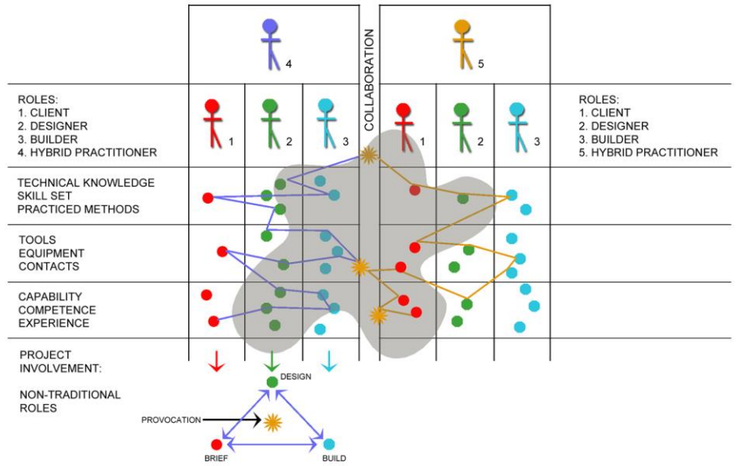
PROVOCATION
REFER FIGURE 4.69 - INSERT

Additional practitioner - client and design roles

Second person providing equal input in design and development of brief. Provocations emerge through discussion and action between the practitioners, often proving impetus for new projects driving the planning to future imagined ways of having and designing, while the first person retains the build role (e.g. Cachet provded support to husband who is a builder, but would not get involved in the build activity).

Figure 4.69:
Roles/process scenarios 8 - 9

ROLE / PROCESS - SCENARIO 10



Hybrid practitioners working together:

The two practitioners become a team fully engaged in the activity. Where a couple is working in full collaboration and both are competent in all three roles, hybrid practice tracks between the practitioners.

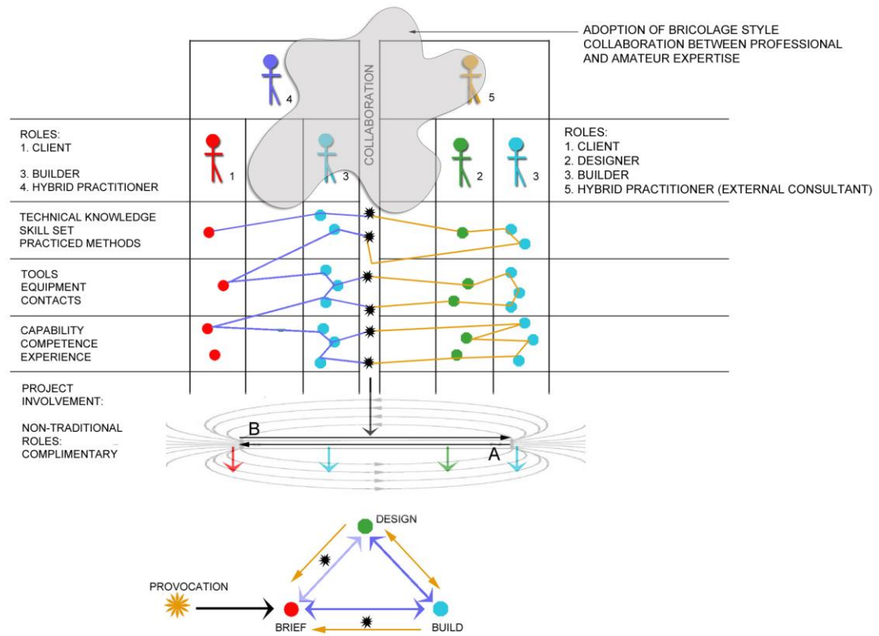
Many instances of provocation occur when the couple explore site through build, brief and design opportunities. The couple can be seen to engage in multiple-roles through bricolage practice (e.g. Jasper with Pollywaffle – selected projects).

KEY:

BRICOLAGE STYLE COLLABORATION BETWEEN PROFESSIONALS AND AMATEURS - LEADING TO HYBRID PRACTICES

PROVOCATION
REFER FIGURE 4.69 - INSERT

ROLE / PROCESS - SCENARIO 11 (PROPOSED)



Hybrid collaboration (proposed):

A new drawing takes the series to the realm beyond case study observations. This diagram reflects a proposed situation where a client is a non-designer but has build skills, working with a designer who is able to dovetail their own build skills with the competence and capabilities of the client.

Developing on discussions of co-design possibilities, an external design consultant has been introduced to the scenario; bring the focus on specialisms rather than competence in all three roles. As before, the two practitioners work as a team, the collaboration between professional and amateur disrupts the traditional linear design-build process opening up opportunities for bricolage style practice.

Diagram illustrates a scenario where collaboration occurs between professional and amateur (pro-am) and disrupts the traditional linear design-then-build process, opening up potential for bricolage practice.

KEY:

A. OPPORTUNITY FOR TRANSFER OF KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS FROM PROFESSIONAL (DESIGNER/BUILDER) TO AMATEUR (CLIENT/DIY-ER)

B. OPPORTUNITIY FOR TRANSFER OF IDEAS AND ALTERNATIVE PROCESS FROM AMATEUR TO PROFESSIONAL - THROUGH CREATIVE INTERPRETATION AND TRIAL-AND-ERROR

COLLABORATION TOUCHPOINTS - LEADING TO INCREASED LIKLIHOOD OF:
- CO-CREATION EVENTS,
- ADAPTATION & APPROPRIATION BEHAVIOUR,
- EXTENDED TIMESCALE PERMITTING RESOURCE RE-USE, RE-CYCLE AND RE-PURPOSE,
- ORGANIC DEVELOPMENT OF BRIEF (WANTS + NEEDS MODIFIED OVER TIME),
- DEVELOPMENT OF BRICOLAGE/COLLAGE OUTCOME (LAYERS/OVERLAYS).

BRICOLAGE STYLE COLLABORATION BETWEEN PROFESSIONALS AND AMATEURS - LEADING TO HYBRID PRACTICES

PROVOCATION
REFER FIGURE 4.69 - INSERT

Figure 4.70:
Roles/process scenarios 10 - 11

Hybrid roles

Having reflected on Shove's human-non-human hybrids and Latour's "weaver of morphisms" (1993, p. 137), the inquiry concept extended to focus on the blending of roles taken on by the practitioner. Each role individually required different tools, skills and experience, and thus in combination, it might be assumed that the *hybrid practitioner* can cross-fertilise role-oriented knowledge and competence. The case study provided an opportunity to investigate if roles exist in parallel or whether they develop a pattern of exchange during the course of DIY projects, and it was found that the roles do not automatically meld.[345] There is a diversity of opinion on the way *hybridity* is manifest within anthropological accounts. Some suggest that different cultures come together without loosing their individual identity, thus maintaining heterogeneity, while others suggest the blending cultures can only result in homogeneity (Kraidy, 2005):

> Hybridity is almost a good idea, but not quite. With related notions of cultural fusion and the creolization of identity it is certainly an important idea not simply as a fertile concept in cultural studies and anthropology but as a motif with a much broader following in art milieus and cultural commentary. (Thomas, 1996, p. 9)

The participants taking part in this study originated from what might be seen as different cultural backgrounds, but more relevant here is the variation in background experience across design/creativity and building/construction. What emerged, especially during the case study, was that the participant more highly trained in a specific work culture (Fleetwood) was the person most likely to maintain quite rigid boundaries between the roles. The more fluid movement between roles was seen in those with design training in alternate areas (Jasper) and those with a wider creative interest (Lotus).

[345] For example, Fleetwood refers to one of his office projects, where the client is also a builder by profession. In the context of this study this client is not a fully hybrid practitioner. This is an important differentiation as the intervention of architects in this case has removed the direct responsibility for making decisions about what, how and why and instead has created a chain of (consolidated or dispersed) decision-making.

A series of eleven role/process scenarios (Figures 4.66 to 4.69) were produced from observations or descriptions recorded during the study, recording the variety of structures and relationships that were found to occur during DIY projects. Transference between roles, practices and skills developed multiple hybrid positions, linking the project and the practitioner, and revealed different points of provocation driving their involvement forward with fresh impetus.

This simple diagrammatic study illustrates the wide variety of relationships, collaborations or interactions possible across a very small sample of projects and practitioners as have been mapped in this research. Although some DIY practitioners consider that they are quite literally doing everything by themselves, taking on all roles, it has been seen that they never work in isolation.

Hybrid practitioner

Having defined the conceptual space of lifestyle as a broad field of people, places and practices (Figure 4.59), the connections and collaborations emerging from the case study data reconfigure the inquiry concept, highlighting aspects of *life choice* relating to dispositions to act, practices and action, or inaction, and individual's position framed by *life chance* (section 3.2). The attributes an individual brings to the situation and the threads of activity they engage with (through roles they undertake) result in change to the context and lifestyle. The hybrid practitioner in this scenario is able to work towards realising their dreams, both in terms of a journey and an outcome—at least in principle, and engineer the transformation of lifestyle. Subsequently located as the person(s) at the centre of a dynamic process, and therefore also as the subject of activity, the individual is also the client-designer-builder at the centre of the project (Figure 4.69).

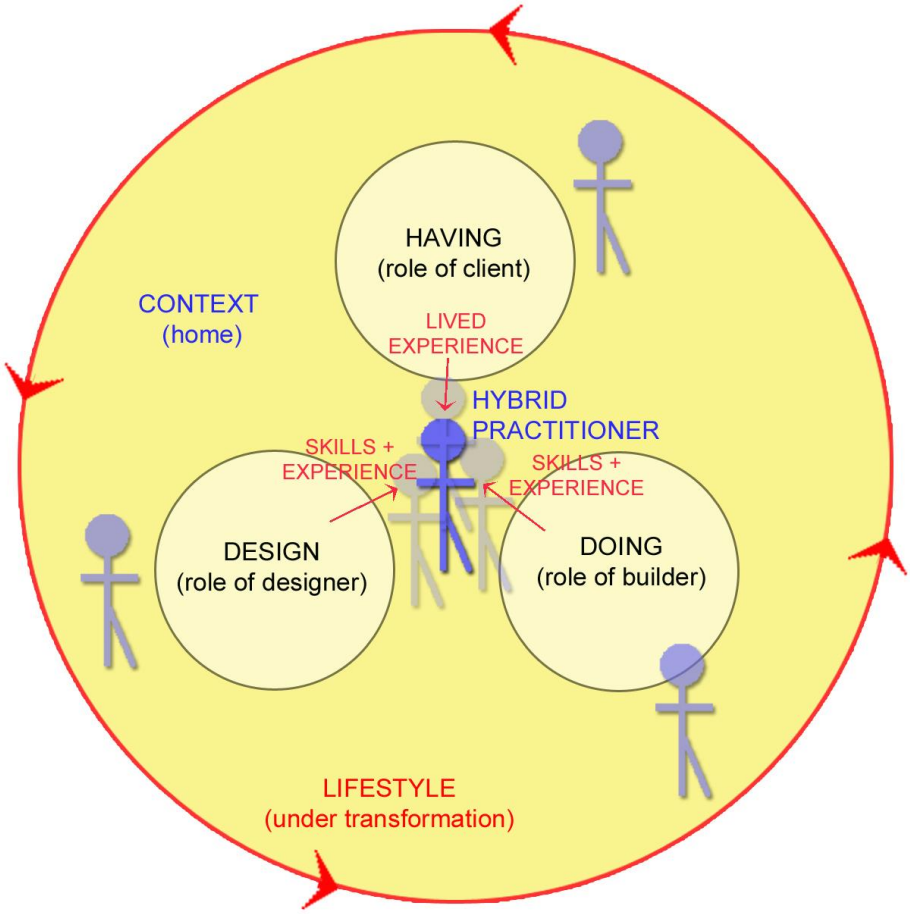


Figure 4.70: Concept remodeled as dynamic system of relations

Although engaging with each role, participants have taken their project from inception to completion; sometimes in sequence and sometimes blended (Figure 4.71). Fleetwood most closely adopted each role and the practices related to the role *in sequence*, mirroring his professional practice experience. Jasper and Lotus adopted more experimental sequences *in parallel*, dabbling in different practices at one time, and Jasper in particular has maintained a number of projects at different stages of development at the same time.

Although hybrid practice in DIY may follow a conventional process whereby briefing, aimed at the resolution of needs and wants, is followed by other stages of building, hybrid practitioners are unable to maintain a linear sequence. Most frequently the three roles are *active* for the entire project, skills, tools and

experience residing in the one *active* practitioner and applied or appropriated as the need arises, bricolage style.

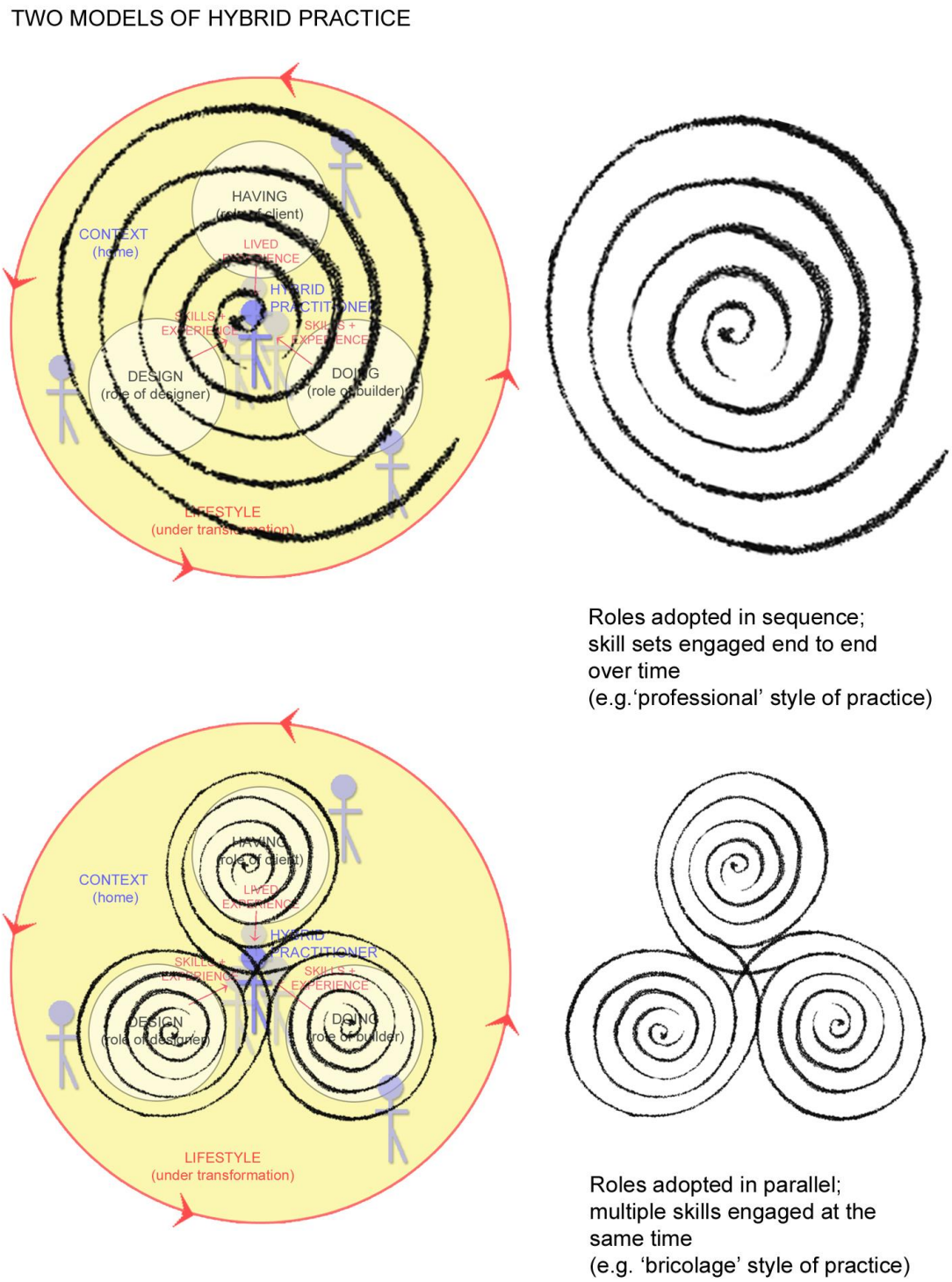


Figure 4.71: Alternative adoption of roles – (top) in sequence and (below) in parallel

4.8 Thread connections

By mapping the dreamscape and investigating the links between threads, or dream tracery, the strongest connection emerging from findings has centred on the person as the adopter of roles and practices, and as practitioner employing imagination, skills and competence. Although the threads individually inform on these roles and practices, in reality they were difficult to separate. Most often the relationship demonstrated a fluid and dynamic interchange of the skills and competence, both between *roles* taken on by people—as hybrid practice, and between individuals or groups over time.

Participant interpretations of lifestyle and patterns of serious leisure activity in their homes have moved the focus towards an understanding of lifestyle as a dreamscape with the power to transform people and place; a dreamscape dependent on life choice and chance, and shaped by practice—levels of competence, skill and experience, and collaboration. During the case study, participants were seen to construct and modify their lifestyles by consciously or unconsciously adopting the roles of designer, builder, and client, each relying on the ability to make decisions within that realm and some requiring specific skill sets and knowledge. The type of person found to be most active and capable of reshaping the home and both during and subsequently reshaping ways of living in the home, thus lifestyle, was the hybrid practitioner, as discussed in section 4.6.

The threads, essential to the dreamscape, not only reflect aspects of real life, but also provide a lens through which lifestyle might be interpreted as a bricolage of real and imagined ways of living. From the synthesis of participant data and relevant literature, the unraveling of lifestyle as a concept has revealed it to be both a multi-layered and multi-faceted construction, and journey of transformation across the overlaps, gaps and cracks of a dreamscape between real and imagined ways of living.

Threads revisited

Lifestyle

This thread has explored the various meanings and applications of the term lifestyle, especially in relation to modifying the physical and conceptual home environment. Human behaviour associated with motivation and the search for meaning, individual and cultural identity and personal and social space have emerged as important components of this thread. Lifestyle is ultimately mapped as a transformative, collaborative, multi-faceted concept, a dreamscape grounded in the everyday and shaped by the interplay of life choice and life chance. It has been seen driven by and as a driver behind consumption and improvement practices, and search for self-actualization.

Participants were seen to create and experience lifestyle through a bricolage-style application of processes and practices applying available skills, competence and individual levels of sufficiency. Connections between places, collaborations between people, hybridity of roles and bricolage of practices have all transpired as essential factors in the construction and modification of 'the self' and lifestyle and portrayed in the media and perceived by individuals.

Context

This thread has been identified with many spheres of influence, from global to local scale, the physical and social realms and in relation to the natural and man-made environments that give form to our daily lives. The emotional, social and historical meaning that home—the dreamspace—has for a person is linked with the powerful human motivation for change. Glossy images of dream houses, like glowing sparks, burn in a fire fanned by the media and fed by popular culture, and the dream of an ideal life rises like a phoenix, a symbol of regeneration[346] and rebirth, from the ashes of consumer culture.

[346] Regeneration in the context of lifestyle and DIY extends from Vannini and Taggart who differentiate between simply occupying a building and truly inhabiting it, embracing opportunities for entanglement and regeneration (2013a).

Having

This thread has revealed multiple interpretations of possession and ownership, ranging from direct consumption to alternative systems of trade, and practices beyond the cash economy to include borrowing and recycling. Both social and individual value systems indicate strong links between status and image, material culture and clutter, and consumption. The notion of having, *having the dream—having it all*, is also linked with human motivation, and the impetus for seeking transformation—the desire to make ideas and dreams *real*.

Doing

This thread has focused inquiry on DIY home improvement mostly as an amateur rather than professional form of building. DIY is revealed as change-making serious leisure activity dependent on competence, skills and social support. Varying levels of practitioner ability and engagement has indicated gaps and cracks in the build process, dependent in part on the separation or collaboration of roles taken during the project. By *doing* renovation work, individuals found ways to connect the conceptual word of ideas and dreams with their real world situations, and for some, the activity rather than the outcome was the most rewarding aspect of dream making.

Design

This thread is located largely in the realm of professional practice associated with building such as architecture, particularly focusing on the tools, vision and ideation of designers, but also reflects on the cognitive and physical manifestations of creativity in non-designers. The focus on design as an ongoing process, a method of shaping dreams, is found applied by many individuals (design and non-design training), and on a collaborative rather than solo basis. Many instances of co-creation and co-design were identified, and seen as opportunities for the evolution of the relationship between traditional roles of client, designer and builder in crafting or re-shaping homes. The satisfaction experienced in direct relation to the

activity of doing, was also reported in the creative activity of conceptualising and developing ideas and plans for a project.

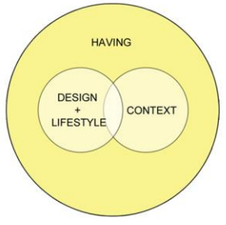
Threads entwined

Entanglements

Diagrammatic studies investigating both observed and proposed relationships between the threads, assisted in *forging connections* during data synthesis (section 2.4), and developing opportunity scenarios for the design profession (Figure 4.72). Comparison between professional design-led design and build practice and (mostly) amateur led DIY practice revealed possibilities for shifting the *frame* of design and the role of designers in shaping dreamscapes. Using conceptual representation of threads, scenarios were explored to reframing the relationship between *pro* and *am* practices through *context* and *having* (Figure 4.73).

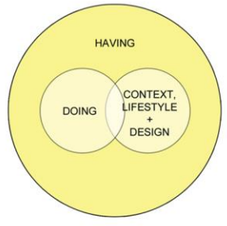
The threads weave together within each person as they actively reshape their lives, at times a single person, at others a braid of many lives, many people joined in collaboration, co-creating and co-constructing. Study findings indicated that practices such as home making and home improvement are connected to patterns of aspiration behaviour, human motivations and levels of practical competence and capability.

If designers have a part to play in reducing rather than encouraging consumption behaviour, Warde's observation that "consumption … is partitioned through its boundedness within practices" (2005, 147), suggests better understanding of how higher order wants and needs after Maslow are connected with *having* through *doing*. This in turn giving designers a clearer understanding of *how* people actively construct their lifestyles. Likewise, in determining the impact of competence and involvement, it may be possible to moderate the level required to *satisfice* rather than optimise aspiration, the latter something designers already accomplish.



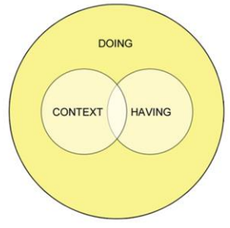
LIFESTYLE BY REAL ESTATE:

HAVING: CONSUMPTION AS DOMINANT PRACTICE/FIELD
CONTEXT: SPECIFIC LOCATION / HOME
LIFESTYLE: FEATURES AS BENEFIT (FUTURE PRACTICE OF HOMEOWNER)
DESIGN: FEATURES AS BENEFIT (PAST PRACTICE OF DESIGNER)
DOING: NO ENGAGEMENT WITH DIY PRACTICE (UNLESS MARKETING 'A RENOVATOR' PROPERTY)



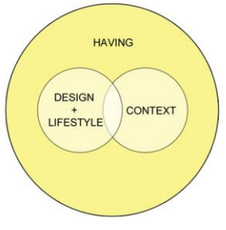
LIFESTYLE BY RENOVATION ORIENTED MEDIA:

HAVING: CONSUMPTION AS DOMINANT PRACTICE/FIELD
DOING: DOMINANT PRACTICE AFTER CONSUMPTION
CONTEXT: SITE/HOME INDICATED AS FOCUS OF ACTIVITY
DESIGN: FEATURES AS VALUE ADDED CONTRIBUTION
LIFESTYLE: VALUE ADDED OUTCOMEOF DIY PRACTICE



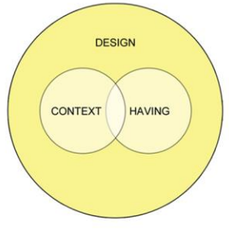
DO-IT-YOURSELF PRACTICE:

DOING: DIY AS DOMINANT FIELD OF PRACTICE
HAVING: CREATES AND INFLUENCES CONSUMPTION PRACTICES
DESIGN: NO FORMAL DESIGN, CREATIVITY MAY BE EVIDENT
CONTEXT: SITE SPECIFIC PROJECTS



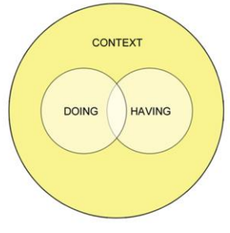
LIFESTYLE BY HOME & FASHION ORIENTED MEDIA:

HAVING: CONSUMPTION AS DOMINANT PRACTICE/FIELD
CONTEXT: NON-SITE SPECIFIC, BUT HOME/ LOCATION DOMINANT
DESIGN: FEATURES AS VALUE ADDED PRACTIVE TO PRODUCTS
LIFESTYLE: CONCEPT LINKED WITH DESIGN



PROFESSIONAL DESIGN PRACTICE:

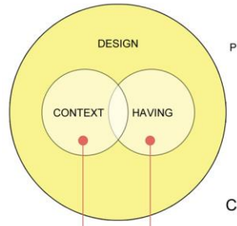
DESIGN: DESIGN DOMINANT FIELD OF PRACTICE
HAVING: CREATES AND INFLUENCES CONSUMPTION PRACTICES
DOING: NO ENGAGEMENT WITH DIY PRACTICE ON SITE
CONTEXT: SITE SPECIFIC PROJECTS



DO-IT-YOURSELF REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE PRACTICE:

CONTEXT: SITE AS DOMINANT FIELD (NOT OF PRACTICE)
HAVING: CREATES AND INFLUENCES CONSUMPTION PRACTICES
DESIGN: NO FORMAL DESIGN, OR CREATIVITY USUALLY EVIDENT
DOING: PRACTICE EQUAL WITH HAVING

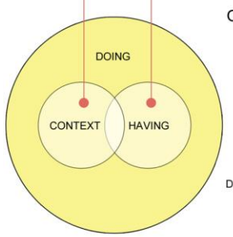
Figure 4.72:
Studies on thread relationship scenarios



PROFESSIONAL DESIGN PRACTICE

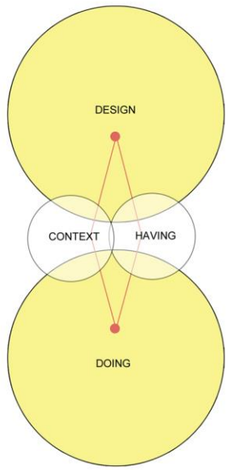
CURRENT SCENARIO:

PROFESSIONAL DESIGN AND DIY PRACTICES ARE BOTH CONTEXT FOCUSED (HOME) ACTIVITIES AND INFLUENCE CONSUMPTION (HAVING). THEY ARE OFTEN ORIENTED TOWARDS DIFFERENT LEVELS OF AESTHETIC AND FUNCTIONAL OUTCOME.



DO-IT-YOURSELF PRACTICE

PROFESSIONAL DESIGN PRACTICE

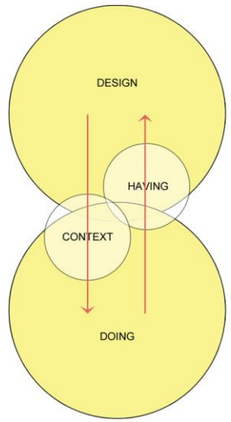


IMPROVED SCENARIO:

BOTH PRACTICES ARE INFLUENCED BY FORCES RELATING TO CONTEXT AND CONSUMPTION THROUGH STAKEHOLDERS; BETTER PRACTICE IS POSSIBLE WHERE ALL STAKEHOLDERS SHARE THE SAME INTENTIONS FOR CONTEXT AND CONSUMPTION.

DO-IT-YOURSELF PRACTICE

PROFESSIONAL DESIGN PRACTICE



BETTER SCENARIO:

THE STRENGTHS OF EACH PRACTICE INFLUENCES THE OTHER; DESIGN WITH GREATER SENSTIVITY TO CONTEXT AND SITE SPECIFIC POTENTIAL AND MINIMALCHANGE, DIY WITH GREATER SENSITIVITY FOR MATERIAL REUSE AND MINIMAL IMPACT SUSTAINABLE PROCESSES.

DO-IT-YOURSELF PRACTICE

Figure 4.73:
Studies on thread relationships - 'pro' and 'am' practices

Challenging taken for granted assumptions[347]

Professional designers *generally* provide guidance on the design component of a project, typical stages of work and services to be provided, which practitioners modify over the course of their career. Architects for example, often approach each office project in a similar way, even though the circumstances, details and scope of work may vary. Disciplinary training assists in drawing boundaries between a designer's work and that of another profession or trade to complement each other, such as an architect and a civil engineer, enabling them to both quote for work and project manage work and resources in practice:

> Designers are 'creative brokers' in compiling, assimilating, and recombining knowledge economies in new ways … [who] then synthesizes ideas from disparate fields and transmits them in novel ways. (Garvey, 2011, p. 144)

It is helpful to briefly recap on the influence of design on home renovation. On a commissioned project, an experienced architect is trained to assess the context for potential opportunities and pitfalls, cultivate the client's requirements, develop a full brief based on a budget, work up a conceptual scheme, produce a set of detailed designs and construction drawings, and finally supervise the builder's work on site to completion. When a non-designer attempts to undertake the same project, they do not have the specialised training or experience to foresee design problems or optimise any potential arising from the situation.

The case studies have illustrated how, when the project is done on a DIY basis, the client takes on the role of designer and builder and is often unable to adequately project manage to a timely completion. Inexperienced DIYers frequently underestimate both how much work is involved in taking on all roles, and the skill set required to properly realise their dreams. However, the client is arguably in a better position than anyone to determine what these dreams are or might be. The homeowner as the client is always more informed, either consciously or sub-

[347] One of the key tenets of design anthropology (Gunn & Ingold, 2010), in effect, untangling claims or suppositions from truths, separating what is known to be real and what is assumed real, but can also be interpreted as the assumption of power—design professions retaining possession of design.

consciously, about their own self-place sensibilities and their current needs than a design consultant who comes to the project with their own interpretive lens, design training and self-place inculcation.

Although professional design practice is geared to efficiency where the scope and process of work is clearly defined, it does not *generally* allow for the exploration of more innovative or experimental approaches. Architectural projects, even small-scale house renovations, dominated by time-frames, trade tolerances, and the standards demanded by the clients, contribute to consumption and building industry waste. Those with connections to architecture have fiercely defended the separation of traditional roles, while clearly not contributing sufficiently to sustainable development, the benefits of improvised practices such as DIY have been largely ignored.

Looking closer at the expectations and experiences behind DIY behaviour and the decision to take on design and building work, this study finds that DIY as a creative activity *can* inform the design profession(s) about more innovative, non-traditional ways to design and orchestrate projects and influence consumption behaviour. Although few professional designers work *with* clients who want to be physically involved in the build, this type of relationship is documented on GD, frequently drawing enormous audiences, indicating a powerful human interest in self-creating dream homes and developing unique relationships with places, buildings and ways of living:

> The quest for a different way of inhabiting place − rather than merely occupying it … [is one of the] entanglements we call regenerative life skills … broadly common to activities, such as craft through which people exercise modest but meaningful degrees of agency and control over their life circumstances and through which they bring practical know-how, dedication, resolve, judgment, creativity, passion, and their lifestyle choices to bear on their day-to-day lifeworld. (Vannini & Taggart, 2013a, p. 6)

Rather than dismiss working on small-scale projects or with DIY clients, which many architectural practices do for time-fee inefficiencies, the notions of hybridity and bricolage discussed in the next section, offer new ways that designers can work

more deeply as collaborators *with* clients. Additionally, the design insight map (Figure 4.58), highlighted large areas of underutilised knowledge. This field, interpreted within the domains of design and anthropology, can contribute to more sustainable visions for the way we as individuals and homeowners live now *and* the way we imagine living in the future.

Weaving a lifestyle

Lifestyle emerged from participant data as a bricolage of activities, experiences and context; a collage redefined at each moment in time by the people involved, each one an expert on their own life, their own capabilities, their needs and dreams:

> Co-Creating Spaces will be especially important in highly complex domains in the future. Designers can make a significant contribution toward these domains if they are open to new forms of collective creativity and if they respect the levels of creativity of the domain experts. (Sanders, 2006)

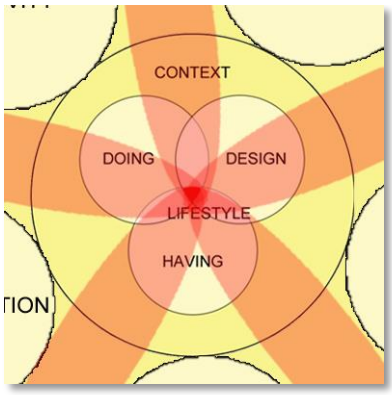
Through this lens, lifestyle becomes a new and elastic space for co-creation where designers and *everyday people* work together to create rather than consume. The presence and importance of social and practical collaboration, particularly with design and DIY (*doing*), but also consumption (*having*), is also evidenced through the media samples. Even though on the surface some participants felt they were struggling on alone with decorating and home improvements, they are supported by information gained on visits to their local hardware stores, or through media experts. Acknowledging the framework established by the lifestyle paradigm (Figure 3.3) and systems model of creativity (Figure 3.14), the importance of *context* (physical, political, economic and importantly social) reveals that none of these activities are carried out in isolation.

When professional designers adopt DIY build practices, such as case study participants Fleetwood and Jasper, the boundaries between consultants and builders are broken down. This represents the contraction of a typical commercial project, multiple individuals involved in the work reduced to one person who could be considered a dreamer/dreamshaper/dreammaker hybrid. Taking the integration of client-designer-builder roles as an alternative model for home renovation *back*

into the commercial realm, requires much greater involvement of *all* stakeholders in a project, early and simultaneously (Tromp, Hekkert, & Verbeek, 2011).

In the same way that "culture change inevitably involves unlearning as well as relearning and is therefore, by definition, transformative" (Schein, 2004, p. 335), the building industry and design professions need to relearn how they interface with the lives of individuals and so contribute to the creation of more sustainable and satisfying lifestyles. The traditional culture of specialisation is at odds with the bricolage of hybrid practitioners, who were found unraveling their rituals, routines and habits, deconstructing the familiar landscapes of their lives in order to remake, remodel and renew they way they live; unlearning and relearning who they are and what they can do.

4.9 Summary



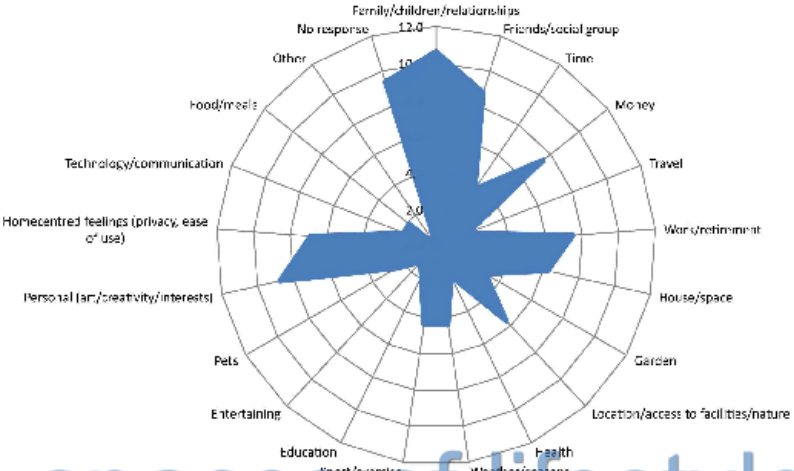
This section reported on participant references to lifestyle specifically about lifestyle at home, and briefly expanded on connectivity between all threads, *lifestyle*, *having*, *doing*, *design* and *context*. The survey responses and conversations were wide-ranging in scope and varied in depth, indicating that a composite participant interpretation of lifestyle remains somewhat illusive. Issues that surfaced were broadly categorised into four areas, personal (including identity), social (including behaviour), physical (including space), and economic. Above all, exploring the concept of lifestyle with participants revealed that the five

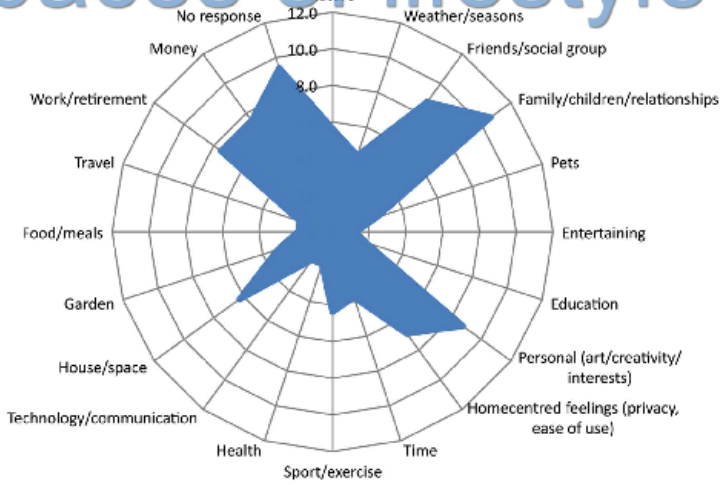
threads tracing different aspects of the inquiry are essentially intertwined. The threads *context* and *having,* explored *through participant data,* closed the distance between behaviour, ideology, value and the motivation to seek change, while the activities of *doing* and *design* were found to contribute most closely to the change-making process itself.

The case study projects found a pro-am divide in relation to the activity of *doing* and process of *design*, yet this was partially overcome in DIY situations where hybrid roles and practices emerged as the vehicle for self and place transformation. The case study also identified various aspects of a DIY project that demonstrated hybridity in terms of role, and bricolage in terms of creative practice. The activities, practices and roles under investigation were found to comprise mixtures or "the fusion of two [or more] hitherto relatively distinct forms, styles, or identities" (Kraidy, 2005, p. 5), with lifestyle emerging as the dynamic interchange, or hybrid association of, place, practice, practitioners and participation:

- hybrid places/spaces – context, identity
- hybrid practices – having, doing, design
- hybrid practitioners/roles – client, builder, designer
- hybrid participation – collaboration, relationships

Above all, projects attempted on a DIY basis were totally reliant on the person(s) at the core of the work—the practitioner(s)—and the nature of their engagement with practices, people and places, and the journey of acquiring experience and gaining competence. The active practitioner is designing and doing, having and dreaming, planning and scheduling, recycling and negotiating resources, sometimes in sequence, sometimes at the same time. Consolidating this data, the study moves forward, reflecting on the original fields of inquiry (Figure 2.9), asking—how do the findings locate (either real or imagined):





Chapter 5: Constructing lifestyle

Having explored participant data through the five threads, this chapter discusses the range of findings as they reconstruct the inquiry relationship and place it in a broader context. The key outcomes are highlighted as hybridity, bricolage, self-place and self-actualization, together with a review of the inquiry concept and redefining of lifestyle.

5:0 Overview

The study set out to explore the concept of *lifestyle* in the context of DIY activity and the associated design processes; and further how lifestyle is created or altered by individuals through direct engagement with changing the fabric and/or aesthetics of the home. Although the reconceptualisation of lifestyle was the focus of this research, developing a new understanding of lifestyle was only possible through much wider exploration of the people, places and practices found to be key elements of the *dreamscape*.

In the last chapter, the person or practitioner was found to be at the centre of the dreamscape, both internally motivated to bring about change—*lifestyle choice*, while also operating within a system of external influences—*life chance*. Through developing or applying *domain relevant skills* from different disciplines, the practitioner is able to embrace hybrid practice, utilising multiple areas of competence and knowledge, facilitating competent dream shaping and dream making practices. Hybridity in this case leans toward goal driven activity, the goal being to change engage with change, to modifying home and to realise a dream—to find a self-place.

A practitioner, who tends more towards *creativity relevant skills*, is likely to embrace change as a less bounded, more flexible process, an experience driven activity (seeking self-actualization). Employing a bricolage of practices and

techniques, materials and methods, practitioners tended towards improvisation, recycling and repurposing, often with a less preconceived output.

In chapter 3, both skill sets, were found to be components of creative activity, of the kind exemplified by DIY. The creative impulse in turn was found to be both self-actualizing thus connected with the search for meaning, and in relation to DIY, connected with the search for a self-place. In chapter 4, hybridity emerged from participant data through the overlap or *fusion* of multiple domains identified by established roles and practices, whereas bricolage was identified by tracery or *patterns,* the way that various elements of practice, place and people were brought together, a collage of autobiographies, resources and DIY projects.

Constructing meaning

The relationship created by the threads and their tracery maps a complex, individual and ever changing way of living in the global and local environment represented by *home*, and bears witness to a search for authenticity and empowerment. The relationship acknowledges the daily struggle for balance between creativity and consumption, and the tension between real and imagined lives, current and future practices, and personal and collective needs, wants and desires. It relies on the imagination, skill and competence of the person around which the threads weave and twine. Participants were found to be hard at work fabricating change in their lives, adopting multiple roles, searching for self-actualization, crafting a self-place and in the process demonstrating collaboration with multiple others, including the researcher.

Where the house has been identified as *a mirror of self*, the house under change can be considered a window onto the aspirations of individuals and society (Marcus, 1995). Although all of the participants working on DIY projects consciously kept their spending to a minimum, there is no denying that their practices created moments of consumption (Warde, 2005):

> Consumption … legitimizes the lack of meaning, in the secular modern world. Through consuming we meet individual needs, construct our

> identities and confirm our membership of social groups. Increasingly we define ourselves in terms of our styles of consumption and the values about our lives that they express – our *lifestyle* – rather than the job we do. Ours is a culture of acquisition, possession and consumer experience. (Press & Cooper, 2003, p. 11, emphasis in the original)

The original intent of the research was to find a way to *map* lifestyle as a way of living, essentially located between two threads, *doing*—DIY as a creative and transformative activity and *design*—a process linked with the realm of architecture. In considering how designers might engage with the concept of lifestyle[348] the study has broadened to include three other threads, *having*, *context* and *lifestyle* itself. If, as Press suggests above, lifestyle is the way humans have come to define themselves and their lives, this section considers the relationship between constructing meaning and constructing lifestyle (Table 11).

Table 11: The construction of meaning

Ch	Section	Main thread*	Key touchpoints**	Sites of meaning**
5.1	Self-place	Context Lifestyle	Home + history, Identity	Place
5.2	Self-actualization	Context Having	Emotion + social Value	Potential: Search for purpose
5.3	Hybridity	Having Doing Design	Value Skills Ideation	People: Fusion of domains + capabilities
5.4	Bricolage	Doing Design Having	Activity Process + tools	Practice: Patterns of activity
5.5	Lifestyle transformed	Lifestyle Having Design Doing Context	Behaviour + identity Value + status Co-design + vision Activity + disruption Home + emotion	Process: Cycle of transformation
* All threads contributed to the emergent construction of the receonceptualisation of lifestyle, and have been identified for their contribution to the sensemaking process. ** Touchpoints and sites of meaning emerged from the sensemaking process, creating a new lens for the interpretation of lifestyle – refer Figure 2.19 and Figure 5.1 (below)				

[348] Such as responding to the call for less consumption-oriented lifestyles in relation to, literally, making home.

Research concept revisited

In seeking to create and make better ways of living, participants exercised choice in the way they expressed power over their immediate realm, yet the study has shown that this activity occurs within a much wider web of relations and across multiple spheres of influence. Cohort perceptions of lifestyle appear to embrace dominant social and personal values and external influences such as global trends (Badcock, 1983). This suggests that however beneficial the personal rewards, the motivational behaviour behind self-empowerment activities cannot be considered in isolation.

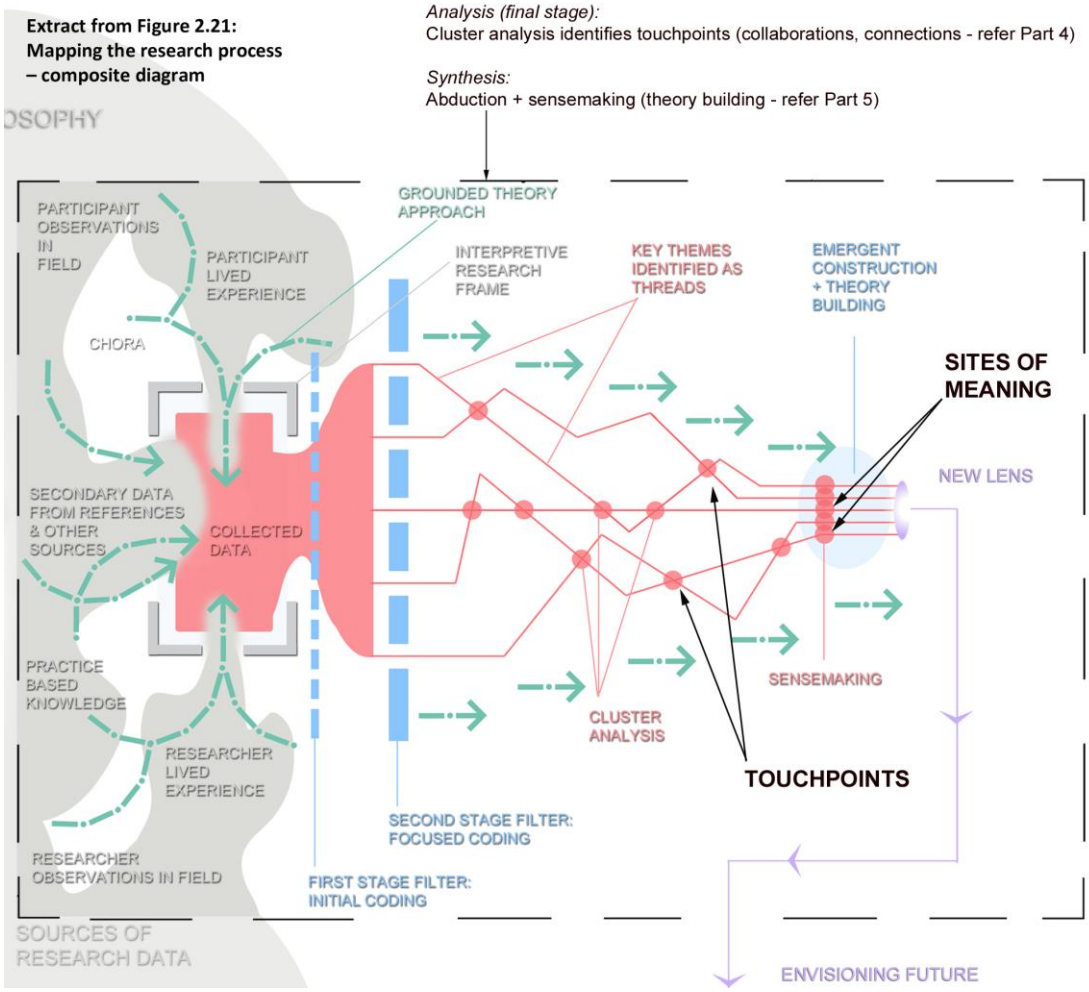
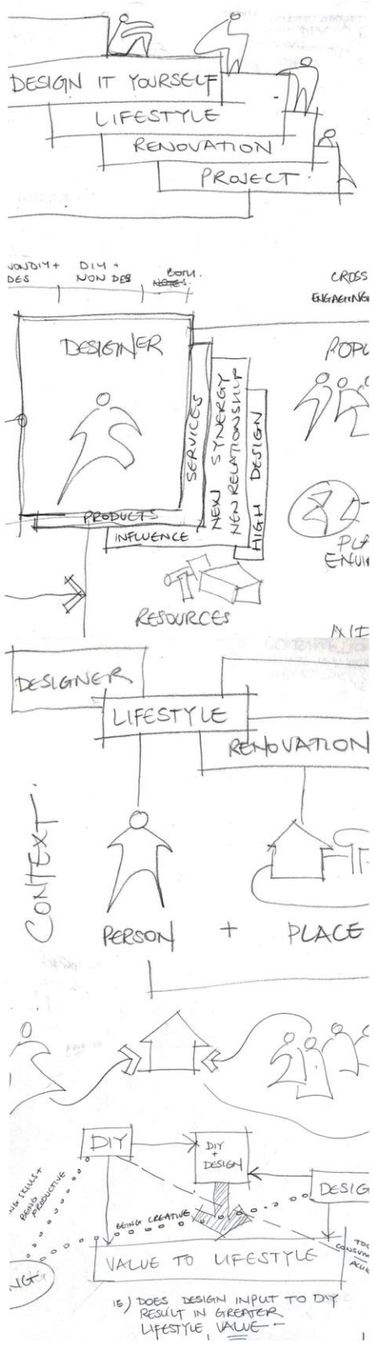
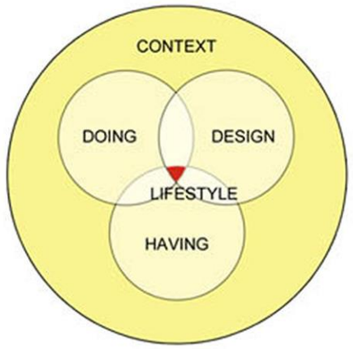


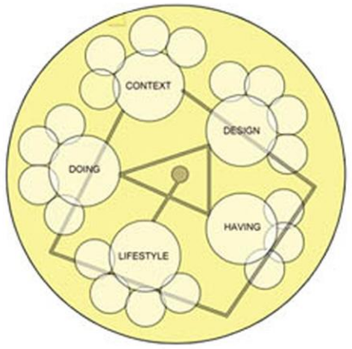
Figure 5.1: Research process (extract) – emergent construction

RESEARCH CONCEPT EVOLUTION - KEY STAGES

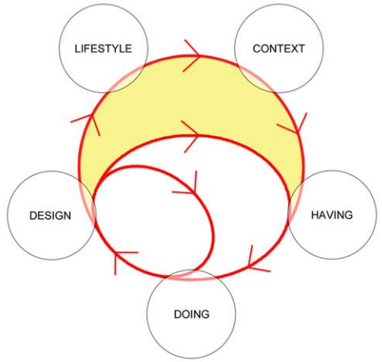




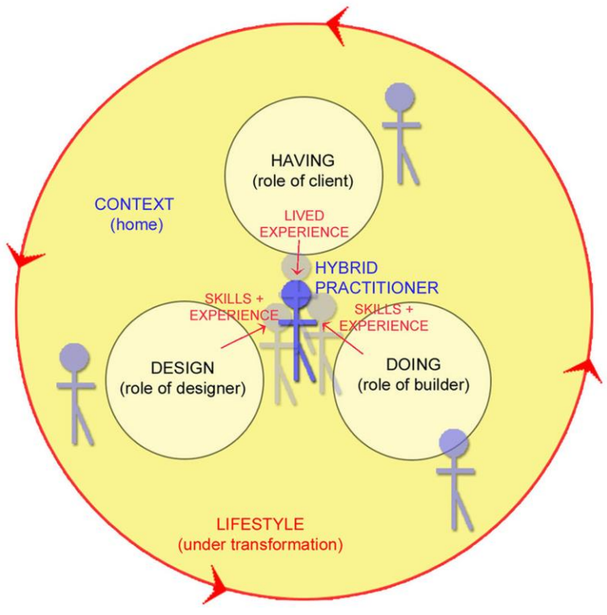
1: BROAD CONCEPT KEY THREADS



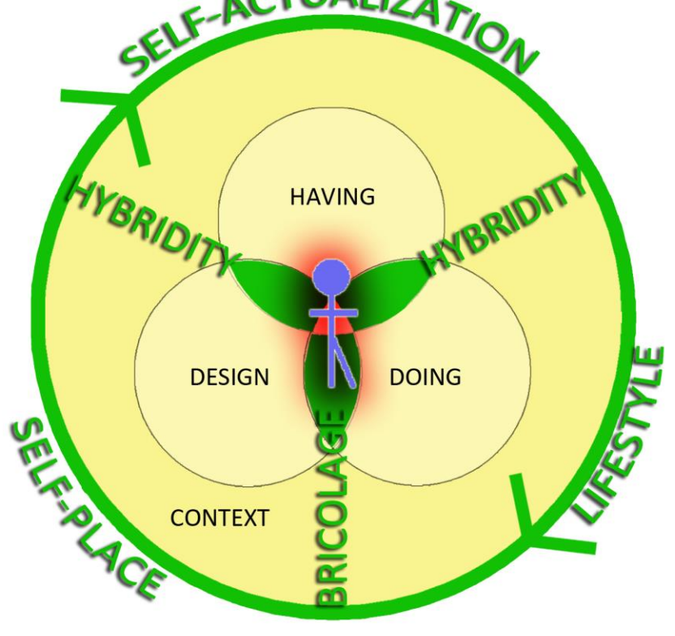
2: THREADS EXPLORED FOR THEMES, COMPLEXITY EMERGES



3: DYNAMIC RELATIONSHIPS EMERGE, NON-LINEAR PROCESSES IDENTIFIED



4: CONTRIBUTION OF HUMAN BEHAVIOUR IDENTIFIED THROUGH ROLES IN THE PROCESS OF MAKING CHANGE



5: SYNTHESIS IDENTIFIES DRIVERS BEHIND TRANSFORMATION, KEY OUTCOMES EMERGE AS INTERRELATED ISSUES

Figure 5.2:
Research concept evolution - lifestyle relocated

As a set of relationships that are contested, co-created and constructed in the domestic environment, the *space of lifestyle* has emerged as a continual interweaving of transformation and collaboration, a bricolage of practices, places and people (Figure 5.2). At the outset, lifestyle was placed at the centre of inquiry, however ultimately a more complex map of human behaviour emerged. The homeowner, dreamer, dream-maker and shaper materialised at core of the concept, both engineering and subject to continual transformation (Figure 5.3).

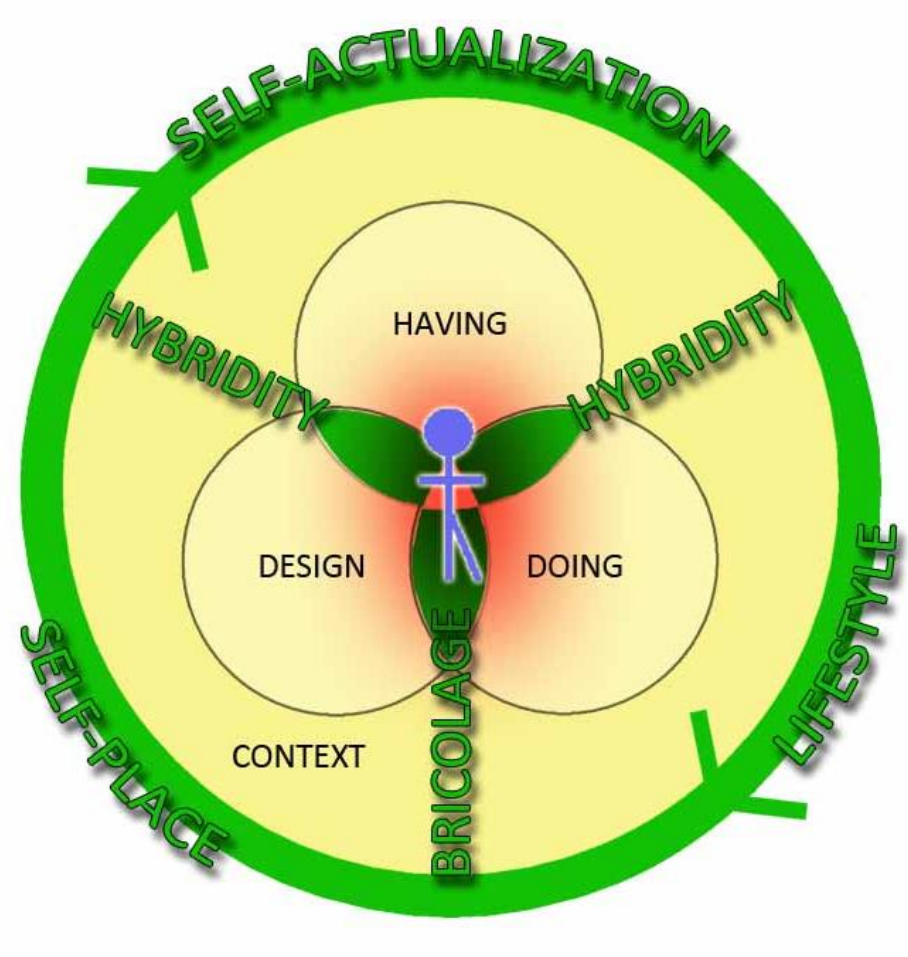


Figure 5.3: Research concept at culmination of data synthesis

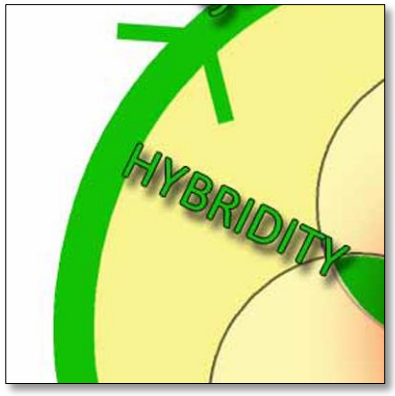
The research indicated that when the person at the centre is a bricoleur with creativity-relevant skills, *as well as* a hybrid practitioner with domain-relevant skills, knowledgeable and experienced in different roles, the potential for improvisation leading to innovation is increased. The hybrid practitioner is able to work with and

across multiple roles, employ a range of skills, apply a broad knowledge base and optimise resources to hand, however, the domain specificity of any one of those roles has been shown to restrict or inhibit creativity (Amabile, 1985).

In order to successfully construct a dream, the central figure requires sufficient resources and competence in practices necessary to materialise their vision. Competent hybrid practitioners are less reliant on advice by the so-called *experts* in the media, or inclined to commission professional expertise. Where the person at the centre lacks specific knowledge in one domain, such as design (specific to built form), there is an opportunity for architects to build collaborative relationships rather than segmenting roles, discouraging DIYers from seeking professional design input. The challenge for the design profession is therefore to recalibrate the perceived *value* of design expertise, and find effective ways to assist homeowners materialise their dreams through sensitive home modification. Architects aiming, for example, at adaptation rather than demolition and new-build through sensitive modification will assist in future-proofing the built and lived environment where possible.

Even without the skills, resources, tools and vision that empower people to make change in a self-sufficient mode, the deliberate modification of home, and thus lifestyle, is made possible through the engagement of others with either single or hybrid skills. Projects completed by external design consultants and builders and/or hire-contractors generally follow a traditional linear design-build process, and often result in typical stylistic outcomes, especially where a client has been inspired by the clinically white and clean, clutter-free, open-plan homes presented in magazines.

5.1 Hybridity



Although this research focuses on self-oriented activity modifying the home in the contemporary era through the experiences of my participants, their competence and their values, early human home-making behaviour revealed hybridity between people and tools and practices – mostly as client *and* builder creating a shelter. Archaeological study of artefacts including tools, both ancient and modern contributes valuable insights to anthropological study of human behaviour, and the possibilities for instances of hybridity to occur (Ingold & Hallam, 2007). Considering opportunities for hybridity to occur in association with design breaks down *taken for granted assumptions about human behaviour*.

The study applies the notion of hybridity to the application of multiple skill sets, but equally significant is the individual's knowledge and competence with the tools and materials specific to the area of skill. Shove provides the example of a person with a stick to demonstrate a human-nonhuman hybrid; by picking up a stick the human becomes the creator of hybrids. The implication here is that without the human on the other end the stick it would be ineffective as a tool, however, observing Jasper working outside has provided evidence extending this further. On many occasions during case study observation, where no human assistant or appropriate tool was available, improvisation skills came to the fore; the participants used what was *to hand*.

The design of hardware tools has noticeably responded to increased domestic use, accommodating hands more familiar with indoor utensils than outdoor tools. Products have become easier to handle and require a smaller learning curve, perhaps following Latour's prediction that modernisation leads to the "exploration and proliferation of hybrids" (1993, p. 144). More recently domesticated hardware tools have undergone further change in what Shove describes as a re-distribution of competence:

> Conventionally seen as a property of the human subject, the history of DIY suggests that competence is perhaps better understood as something that is in effect distributed between practitioners and the tools and materials they use. (2007, p. 55)

Certainly in recent years, the lighter, easier to handle equipment with built-in safety features enable the amateur to do the work previously only completed by a skilled tradesman. Shove also refers to this as human de-skilling, or a form of product up-skilling, where the product or tool has gained technical *know how* that can accommodate users who are not conversant with professional methods of work.

Although technology has facilitated closer hybridity between the roles of the client and builder, technology aiding the design *process* is an altogether more complex proposition. Domino and Scooter, participants without design skills, reported buying a software programme aimed at closing the gap between the skills of an experienced architect and non-designer in developing three-dimensional options, but found it too difficult to use. Where television programmes such as GD or home and garden magazines provide inspiration and ideas, they are unable to transmit *process* know-how, or site/situation specificity, and thus optimise design potential of projects.

With the proliferation of *user-friendly* products and tools, there is clearly benefit for manufacturers to invest in the development of technologies that close the professional-amateur competence gap. The ease of use, of a tool or piece of equipment, contributes to the experience at all stages, the lower the difficulty, the higher the speed of work and greater perception of achievement. Yet with less

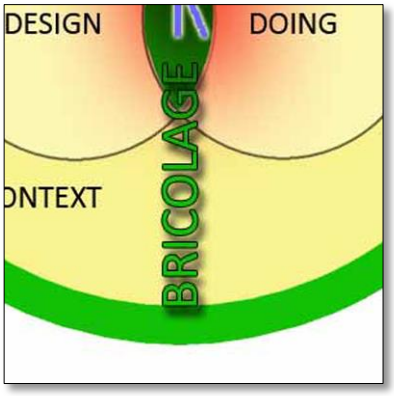
challenge, possibly the less likelihood of achieving *flow*. Where the experience of doing and having is positive and where study participants met their own expectations, the likelihood that he or she would recommend materials or repeat product use was increased. This brings to the fore the part that social relations play in DIY, highlighting the extent to which it is a socially hybridised practice.

Recommendations from others *you trust* featured highly in the choices participants made, accounts of the experience were enhanced by the input of others, both for company and for assistance. The personal sphere of knowledge, influence, ideas and experience limits even the most competent practitioner. It is here that the contribution of co-creation and co-design practices in DIY have the greatest potential, where people are the carriers of different skills and practices:

> Practice theory … encourages a shifted self-understanding. It invites us to regard agents as carriers of routinized, oversubjective complexes of bodily movements, of forms of interpreting, knowing how and wanting and of the usage of things. (Reckwitz, 2002, p. 259)

Although complementary competences were found to enhance the experience of people undertaking DIY, negative experiences often curtailed further attempts at tasks by participants. Although some grew into the role of hybrid practitioner combining the separate roles of client, designer and builder in sequence or in a bricolage, others chose instead to remain as client, homeowner and dreamer. It should not be forgotten that the participants in this study are subject to hybrid *lives*, variously engaged in roles as neighbours, parents, carers, employees or employers, researchers and authors. Again the roles are embedded and entwined with the daily routines and rituals that comprise the other parts of one's life; the physical, social, economic, geographic and political climate that we live in. Our physical presence co-exists with and within the digital world, and mixed worlds are necessary, and we need to cross these boundaries and become hybrids (Jones, 2002).

5.2 Bricolage



Bricolage and creative practice of DIY

Although design and building are, traditionally, part of a linear construction process, this study has observed alternative patterns of work, use of skills and roles that occur when people engage with an extra-ordinary situation. The case study presents examples of designers working on their own homes rather than those of clients, and a creative writer applying novel methods for visualisation. When *design* and *doing* are taken out of one context (professional) and *reframed* through another (amateur), a bricolage of practice emerged. Using a diverse resource of materials and techniques not normally associated, bricolage also has the potential to throw up new processes and practices from known associations, even though the outcomes may not be regarded as radical or innovative (Norman & Verganti, 2011).

Revisiting Norman and Verganti's *design research quadrangle* (Figure 3.23), it is possible to reflect more fully on the location of bricolage in the French translation as DIY activity, and design process (Figure 5.4). This investigation ultimately revealed that *accidental* design outputs emerged during the collection and analysis of case study data. Participants with design training but not specific to the situation, such as urban design, were found to both *tinker* in their approach to some aesthetic and practical decisions on their DIY projects. The non-designers also demonstrated less focused goals as they tried to interpret and apply design images from books or magazines to their own home, or make aesthetic and functional choices based on various, sometimes conflicting, recommendations from *experts* in

the media. Participants with specific design training such as architects, however, mostly demonstrated a purposeful and established use of design skills to make improvements in form and function, and by contrast did not tinker, or even innovate, at all.

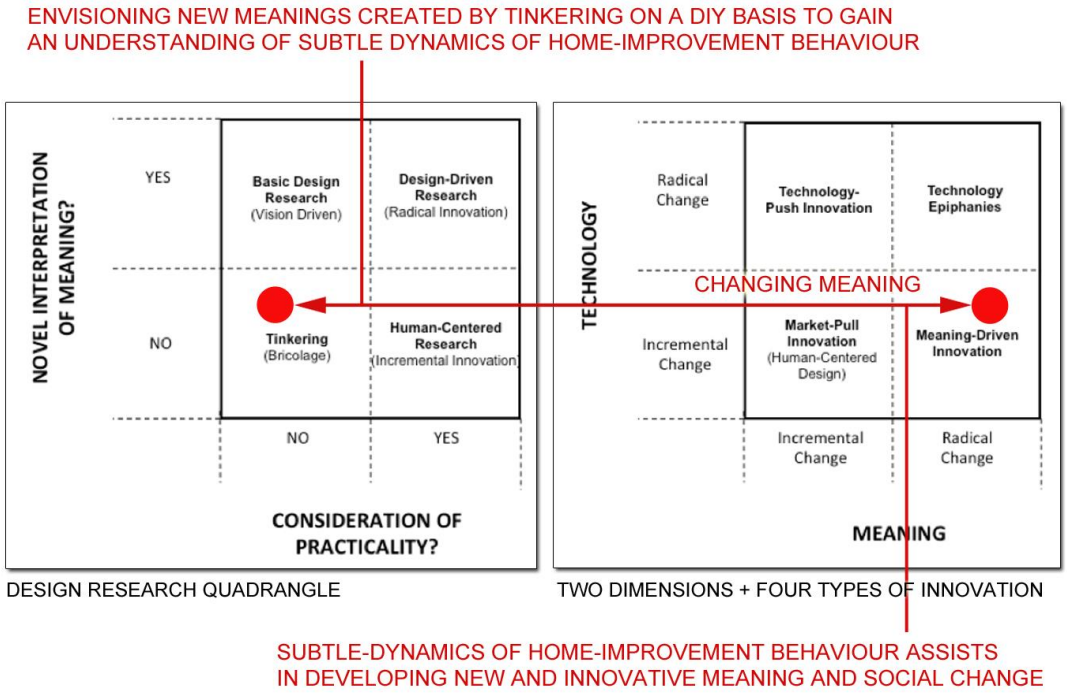


Figure 5.4: Introducing DIY to design as a change of meaning.

In identifying *design-driven research* (DDR) as a process aimed at creating new meanings, and the *meaning-driven innovation* offering potential for change, the quadrant and innovation models offer a new direction for the role of design in relation to this research. Through combining the tinkering of non-designers, and a focus on DDR, a process that seeks to understand why people do or buy things, new insights into human behaviour that seeks to modify *lifestyle*, neither a product or a service but a concept imbued with socio-cultural meaning. The innovation framework suggests that *meaning driven innovation* starts from "the comprehension of subtle and unspoken dynamics in socio-cultural models and results in radically new meanings … [implying] a change in socio-cultural regimes" (2011, p. 13).

Participants as bricoleurs

Everyone in this study has been touched by bricolage, both through juggling multiple positions, parent, friend, partner, survey respondent, interviewee, case participant and through the collage and montage practices used to shape and re-shape lifestyle, and make time for questions and probing. Amid the complexity that is our hybrid artificial and natural world, people construct their own ontology and epistemology from the information *to hand*, whether the contemplations of philosophers, musings of journalists or whispers of passing strangers (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998).

Individuals use their own everyday methods of gathering data and attempt to validate it by triangulating between sources; the media, their own observations and the opinions of people they regard. Tempered by experience and judgement people continually shift between familiar and new positions of interpretation, coming into contact with new information, new situations every day, and piecing together new understandings. Whether dreamer or dream maker, painter or planner,[349] bricolage touches us all:

> Every class, every age cohort, each gender uses *whatever material is to hand* as a tool of differentiation and of exclusion. This can as well be rock music or football … as ballet or the beaux arts. (Bennett et al., 1999, p. 269)

The homeowner, an active agent of change and as a consumer of media, home décor items, hardware tools and resources, is subject to the opportunities and limitations at the intersection of life chance and life choice. DIY home renovation provides the homeowner with choice; with a more flexible and experimental approach to the acquisition and use of material artefacts in pursuit of *a known or imagined goal* (Miller, 2001).

[349] Turkle's pluralist approach to work practices, the bricoleur *painter* versus the *planner* with a more rigid frame of reference, section 3.5.

Multiple applications

By way of acknowledging the broad influence of the term bricolage on this design research study, the following applications are highlighted:

(i) As a methodology, the interdisciplinary lens and multiple methods have permitted the comparison of theoretical approaches that have provided different routes into understanding the social world. Further, it has facilitated theoretical development and an approach to constructing meaning through 'the re-shaping of lifestyle'.

(ii) As a collage-like method of documentation of data, used in a similar way by participants as they accumulated ideas, samples and photos to give shape to their dreams and describe their DIY projects.

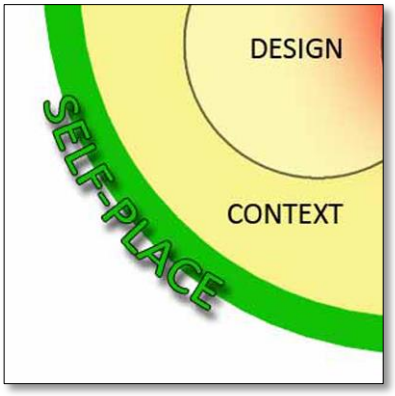
(iii) Engagement in the practice of (French) bricolage or DIY. For career DIYers, through practicing and participating, immersion in DIY becomes part of the everyday lifestyle of those involved.

(iv) Participant narratives of their DIY experience present a personal bricolage of past, present and future perceptions of their home life under transformation; a tapestry of memory, interpretation and imagination.

(v) Lifestyle is interpreted as a unique and continually changing bricolage of complex issues, the tangible and intangible, the creative and mundane, the ordered and chaotic, future and past, the solitary and the companioned, the real and the imagined.

(vi) As a creative practice, accessible to designers and non-designers alike, that assists in the journey towards both self-actualization and self-place.

5.3 Self-place



The findings in this study indicate that the renovation of home is conveyed by the media as a way to *escape* the ordinary and everyday nature of the surroundings we have become used to. Indeed, some participants have rejected the functional shortfalls of the building they live in or the outdated fashions of the décor, and deliberately engaged with the process of change. Adopting ideas from showcase homes and gardens and improvement projects seen on lifestyle television or in magazines or at display homes, may equally be interpreted as a form of escape from reality. Some participants looked to the media for inspiration and ideas that extend beyond the resources of their own imaginations. However, it was in the physical and personal engagement with a change-making process, DIY, that the participants most closely demonstrated an active participation in the experience of escape, and a search for the sense of self and self-place. The case study participants all expressed a sense of detachment from the routine of work or home life while actively involved with DIY—making, using and producing, some experiencing moments of *flow*.

The pursuit or construction of an individual self-place suggests a search for *authenticity*, the "process by which something – a role, product, site, object or event – is confirmed as 'original', 'genuine', 'real' or 'trustworthy'" (E. Cohen & Cohen, 2012, p. 3). The interface between individual's everyday life at home and their projected/ideal life, has been hijacked by media, retail and commercial pressure, such that "businesses must now add *authenticity of experience* as

something to be managed … [where] authenticity [means] purchasing on the basis of conforming to *self-image*" (Gilmore & Pine II, 2007, p. 5, emphasis in the original).

Architecture as a business provides clients (as consumers) with the opportunity to explore their *self-image* through the creation of a building unique to the client, at least at the beginning of a project. The homebuilding industry, however, mostly provides more generic new buildings, and the homeowner is left to seek an individual *home making* experience through decorating and furnishing the home (consumption). Older homes, with greater variation in format and style and often more individual *character*, may provide a more authentic self-place. The vast majority of people, who undertake home improvement work, unless the scope of work is substantial, do not engage an architect/designer to assist in identifying possibilities for alteration. In making this choice, they may be missing an opportunity to transform existing spaces into *well-designed* living environments.

Renovation on a DIY basis brings delivers a *real* physical and emotional *experience*, helping some participants to escape from everyday routines through planning projects, shopping in hardware stores, using different tools or materials and altering home environment while undertaking various DIY tasks. Even if others do some of the construction work, renovation delivers a new experience once the project is complete and the nature of the space has changed. The outcome here a *realised* projection of an internal desire mediated by external influences.

Tom Selwyn's concept of *hot authenticity*, interpreted by Roy Jones[350] as "things we would like to believe exist", is reflected by the media. The vision of a future *ideal* lifestyle, the image of a luxury house as a something to emulate, or plans for renovation as a future place to make real. According to Jones, many of us feel we are living *without* authenticity, comparing our lives with the Hollywood version of living, through media portraits of celebrity lives and luxury homes that has become

[350] In a keynote speech for the 'Changing Facts: Changing Minds; Changing Worlds 2011' conference held at Curtin University, WA.

the norm, so prevalent they *seem* authentic. So too the ubiquitous white walls, the blank canvases perpetually ready for someone else to personalise and authenticate: "On the domestic level, especially, some place like home must reflect the best of each of *us* uniquely, not the best of someone else" (Israel, 2003, p. 161).

The search for authenticity and self-place was most clearly evidenced through participants Diva and Emporio, who bought an apartment to escape from the mess of their long-time home—their *real* reality, and maintained it in the style of a new hotel apartment—their *ideal* reality. Over the course of the study, the apartment gradually filled with belongings bought or transferred from the couple's house. Their habitual way of living *with stuff* necessary to their occupation of space, wherever they were. Their desire was to exist in the *hyperreal* world of magazines; the perfect, spacious and clutter-free place beyond reality. Indeed, the media would have us believe, that the consciousness is unable to distinguish reality from a *simulation* of reality, believing the glossy images are where *real* celebrities live, work, rest and play.

To explore people's bond with places present and past, Israel adopted a form of *topoanalysis,* a term Baudrillard has applied to "the systematic psychological study of the sites of our intimate lives" (Bachelard, 1964, p. 8). According to Israel, it is possible to develop a wider sense of personal environmental biography, helping individuals find *a place of the soul* (Marcus, 1995). Relevant to this study, Israel believes:

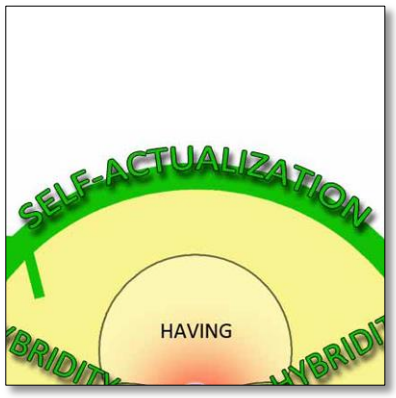
> Our sense of self-place connection continues to grow and change throughout our lives … shaped … by the physical reality … but also by the psychological, social/cultural and aesthetic meaning that place holds for us … consciousness [of this meaning] can help us create places that express a fulfilling self-place bond. (2003, p. viii)

Although he asserts that designers "have a particular responsibility to build places that help us reinforce this vital bond" (ibid.), he is critical of the de-humanising effect that technology, especially design/documentation software such as CAD, is having on designers; an unwelcome human-non-human hybrid. In migrating from

manual to digital tools, sitting in front of a computer rather than sketching in the field, Israel fears designers are becoming "less attuned to the psychological and social dimension of the places they are designing" (2003, p. ix).[351]

The continual specialisation of design and the adherence to established methods of work have already been identified as limitations with respect to person-place sensitivity. Expanding the designer's brief to include investigation of a client's environmental autobiography would require developing wholly different collaborations, such as working with psychologists and social and cultural anthropologists, and wholly different work practices and skills. Introducing disciplines focused on behaviour and fields such as *transformation design* and *design anthropology* to a designer's training would acknowledge these limitations, and address an ever-narrowing educational programme focused on institute certification.

5.4 Self-actualization



Maslow' self-actualization linked with human motivation has been extended by Israel, building on his studies on the search for a connection with self-place, and further considered in this study in relation to real versus ideal concepts of home-oriented needs and wants (Figure 5.5[352]). Both Maslow and Israel's models (introduced in section 3.4), indicate that multiple aspects of home and human

[351] The drawing questions in the survey highlighted impersonal nature of Fleetwood's computer plan in contrast to Lotus' evocative hand drawn response refer Figure 4.54.
[352] Adapted from: Israel, 2003, p. 223.

experience lead to the *higher* levels of needs, neither assuming that any individually defined need exists in a vacuum, nor that the search for self-actualization begins with a blank slate:

> Few people reach complete self-actualization in their lives or their homes. How far we climb up Maslow's hierarchy is dependent on the complex interplay of the physical, emotional, social, and aesthetic forces we have experienced… We [need to] set aside all images labeled 'ideal home' or 'ideal place'. (Israel, 2003, pp. 160-1, emphasis in the original)

Although historical attachments with home (Diva), with inherited tools (Jasper, Paperbark), and memories of doing DIY with parents (Emporio, Tangent, Pandora), all link the experience of DIY with the past, data also revealed the appeal of *the new*, the fresh. To this end, architects like Fleetwood and Lexicon reported that clients frequently scour magazines for images and ideas of what they could have instead of what they have got. In other words, looking outward rather than inward for inspiration, looking to the future not the past, preferring new over old.

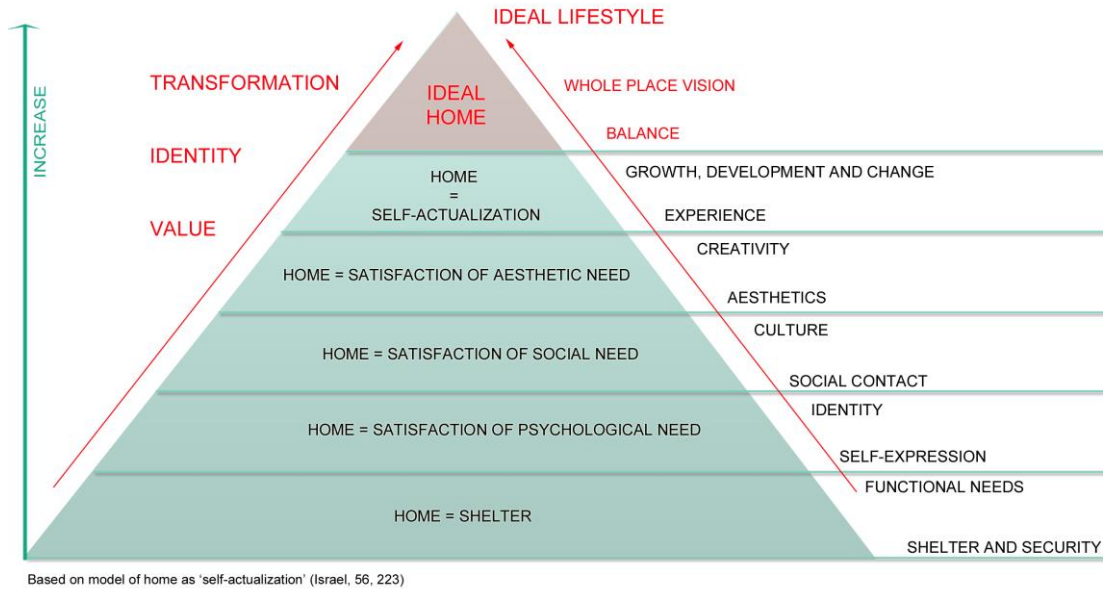


Figure 5.5: Model of personal and home oriented needs in transformation

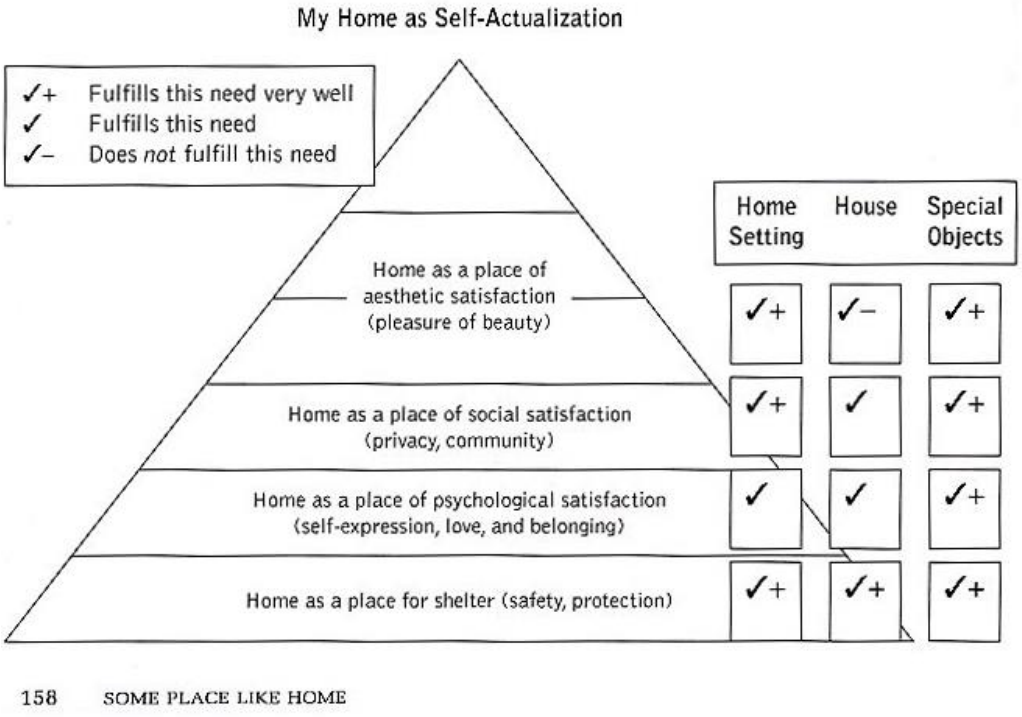


Figure 5.6: Exercise – creating 'some place like home'

Although Fleetwood is adamant that he does not need to know how clients live or have lived in creating a future home for them, Toby Israel disagrees, and further feels certain that the endless search for a better place relates to a sense of loss. The emptiness is, he says, "a grieving over a gap that exists for all of us (including architects) between our present sense of house and our buried sense of home" (2003, p. vii).

Israel has developed a series of exploratory exercises grounded in design psychology including the assessment of home and the contents inspired by Maslow's hierarchy (Figure 5.6[353]). Adopting exploratory tools such as this may give designers an opportunity to extend their understanding of their own self-place; the self-place of their clients, and the role of participation in home making that helps people achieve a sense of self-actualization. Models such as this, together with approaches contributing to this study, and methods used by Israel, Clare Cooper

[353] Source: Israel, 2003, p. 158.

Marcus, and scholars of design anthropology for example, provide alternative tools for designers.

Although there has been value in terms of design research in exploring how a bricolage of methods and models can enhance awareness of complex issues such as lifestyle, applying this approach in a profession capacity is less feasible. Given time constraints and the pressure on generating traditional outputs,[354] there is little opportunity for most practitioners to consider exploring individual environmental autobiographies and map the social, cultural and personal aspects that are important to a client as well as the physical environment.

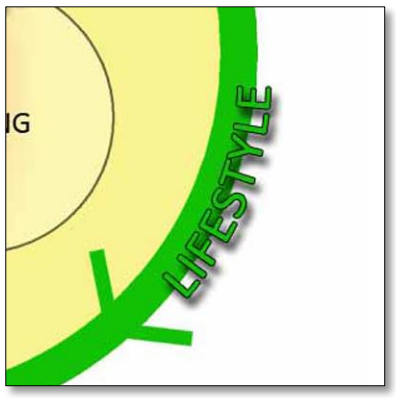
When reflecting on the lived experience generated as a DIY project unfolds, for participants in my study and participants in other studies on home-making, there is strong evidence to suggest that people experience moments of *flow* while conceptualising or tackling home-based projects (Jackson, 2010). Of the eight factors accompanying *flow* (Figure 3.15), this study focuses most closely on the level of challenge and satisfaction, which is aligned with the goals, ability, motivations, interests, personality (often with autotelic tendencies), competence and skill set of the person(s) at the centre of the activity. Although DIY is often considered a solo activity, the research findings support Csiksentmihalyi's belief that groups of people can achieve flow while working together (Fischer & Giaccardi, 2007). The interplay of both individual and collaborative practices was found to be at the core of both direct observations and participant narratives about DIY activity.

The findings also suggest that the sense of personal control over the activity and/or situation, in this case renovating the home and lifestyle, is achieved through design *and* build competence and a personal, or group, interpretation of task success. In taking control over your immediate environment and therefore shaping the way you live—life choice, or being in a position to take control—life chance, people are able to feel confident, competent and capable. The *seemingly autotelic* nature of

[354] For example, a design package meeting all relevant constraints, not least time and budget.

DIY coupled may provide a route through the dreamscape, an opportunity for self-growth and the capacity for embracing change.

5.5 Lifestyle transformed



Lifestyle has been repositioned during the course of, and resulting from, the research inquiry. The reconceptualisation of lifestyle necessitated not only the exploration of *lifestyle* as a way of living under continual modification, but the also investigation of four other key topics as threads; the *design* process, the creative practice of *doing*-it-yourself (and with others), and both the internal motivations (*having*) and external influences (*context*) behind change making activity.

No longer at the centre of the conceptual relationship, lifestyle has been displaced by the human figure, whether homeowner, practitioner, participant, colleague, family member, household, cohort or group. As for a *weaver of morphisms* applying instinctive *and* learned behaviour through conscious actions to map out projects for change, the homeowner as hybrid practitioner is revealed instead as a *weaver of threads* (Engestrom et al., 1999). In drawing together the five main topics, weaving them through the research, the entanglement of knots and loops has knitted the threads together, combined in both predictable and novel ways (Figure 5.7).

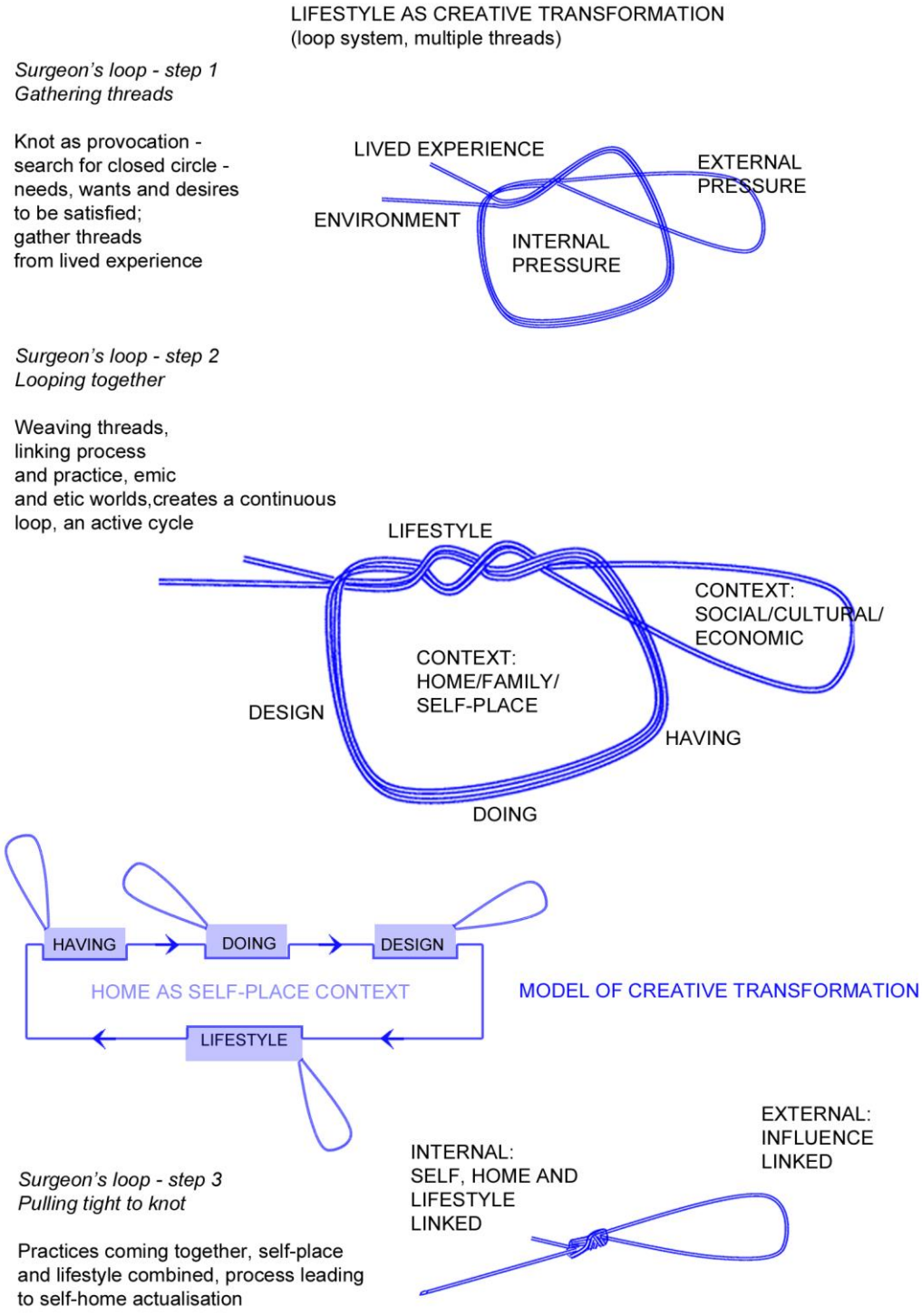
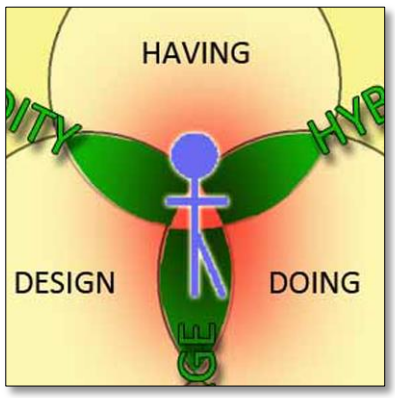


Figure 5.7: Lifestyle as creative transformation

Not only a goal of transformational activity, a dream space, lifestyle is transformed as the byproduct of activity; modified through engagement with performance, a series of overlapping experiences and experiments. The media interprets lifestyle as a noun, participants as a verb. By moving lifestyle from the centre of the research inquiry concept to the outside, delineating and encompassing, the concept represents a way of living *with* change, not passively accepting change, but applying creative intervention to direct transformation. The study arrives at lifestyle as a cycle of transformation, one that is ongoing and continually reconstituted by people/social relations (new expectations, fashions), artefacts (new products) and actions (new methods), technological developments and new forms of media) that change the status quo on a continual basis. If participants in this study are *weavers of threads*, the process of weaving is entirely about the interlacing of design and use practices, tying loose ends, closing gaps, untangling contradictions, binding edges, creating order, bringing ideas and reality together.

5.6 Summary



A complex web of internal motivation and external influence was found to anchor the driving forces behind transformation behaviour; the ongoing search for better lifestyle, for moments of self-actualization and for a self-place, a well-designed bespoke place of comfort, space and light. The activity threads (*design*, *having* and *doing*) materialise through roles adopted by the participants either individually or in collaboration others and with past memories, present realities and future dreams.

Findings revealed that hybridity occurs through the adoption of roles and the application of multiple skill sets to an imagined and realised project. Bricolage emerged as the method of applying skill sets, utilising the situation, tools and resources to hand. Hybridity and bricolage together enable the person(s) at the centre of the concept to engineer change to and with their lifestyle.

The research has established a new design landscape centred on the transformational nature of practices and processes.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

6.1 Research response

The research presented in this thesis focuses on the dynamic relationship between process, practice and personal experience—touching on design, DIY and lifestyle respectively—in the shaping, construction and ongoing modification of everyday lives. Although chapter 5 has mapped the outcomes of the study in detail and as such has addressed the research questions in a more contextualised way, the following is a more concise summary drawing out the key responses.

Research question 1

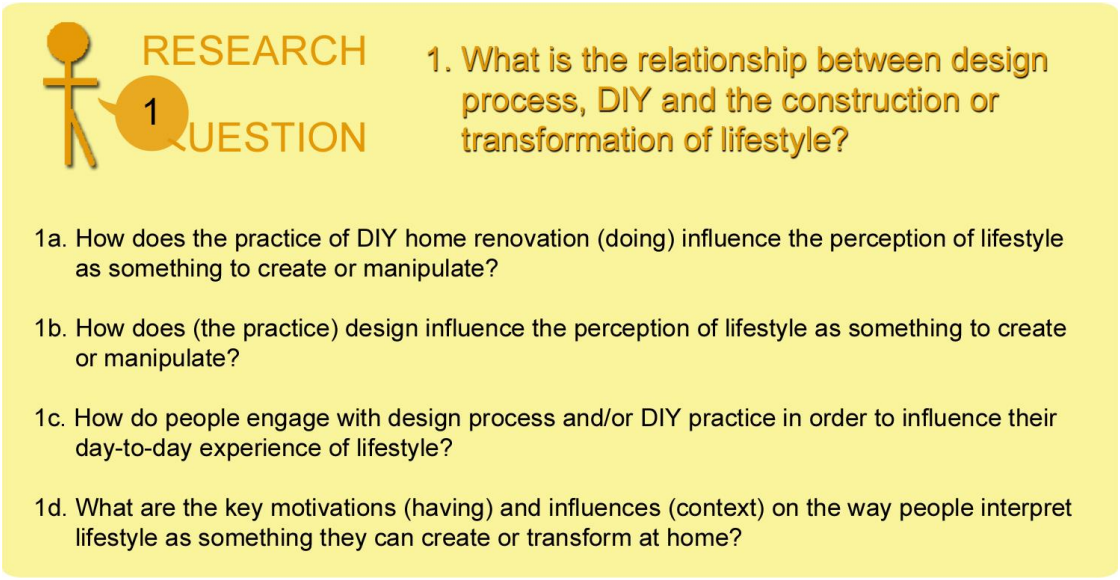


Figure 6.1: Research question 1 and sub-questions

1. Overarching question – design + doing + lifestyle (+ context + having)

The relationship between design, home-improvement on a DIY basis and the creation of lifestyle has been explored through a conceptual lens, firstly with *lifestyle* as the focus of construction or transformation (chapter 3 and 4), and later with the individual as practitioner at the core, orchestrating change and experiencing transformation (chapter 5). The relationship itself has emerged as a

dynamic and complex composition of three areas of human practice (*doing*, *design* and *having*), each shaped by external influences such as media and popular culture (*context*) and internal pressures including motivation and aspiration (*having*) centred on the individual[355] and their perceptions of *lifestyle*.

The relationship under investigation was constructed or created *through* the human need for experience, change and improvement, particularly the aspiration for *the good life* and the belief that a better life is possible through the modification of three-dimensional space. Further the relationship was negotiated *between* design and use practices, a pro-am blend of skills, tools and techniques from the professional domain and from the realm of the amateur practitioner, a blend of vision and production, between ideal and real notions of a *better* way of living.

Although the media portrays lifestyle, in relation to home environment, as something transformed by *having* alone, participants have interpreted lifestyle as something that can be constructed or transformed at home through *having* and *doing* together with aspects of *design*. Lifestyle is ultimately found to be a way of living that is linked inextricably with design (dream shaping disciplines), specifically architecture, through:

(i) The *dream space* as the physical home environment and patterns of human behavour in relation to home thus the domain of designers.

(ii) The *dreamers* as the inhabitants' vision of a better life constructed both internally and externally and thus expanding the skills and tools of designers to embrace the user focus, while also assisting the user to resolve any conflict between real and ideal.

(iii) The *dreamsellers* and notions of what makes an ideal home, thus greatly extending already established design notions of spaces that are well-designed and spacious, and offer comfort.

[355] Thus influenced by the characteristics of each individual, such as personality, experience, skills, competence, capability, creativity and imagination.

(iv) *Dream construction* and the desire for continual change and improvement, a way of living actively constructed and manipulated by both individual and collective engagement with roles and practices, lifestyle links design *and*/*with* use (making + producing) practices.

(v) The *dream/Dream* as an evolving bricolage of social, physical, personal and cultural aspects of an individual's life; a complex collage that benefits from design as *one source* of creativity, not the sole source of creativity.

The study has found that lifestyle, *the dream*, is an ever-changing collage of life choice and life chance; something constructed and modified through design and use practices that are both transformative and transforming. What is more, lifestyle is experienced both in an imaginative or *dream* frame—the perfect lifestyle/the good life/the ideal home, and in a realistic frame—home life embracing comfort and a home that is well-designed, easy to maintain, spacious.

1a. Doing + lifestyle

The practice of DIY, when experienced in a positive light where both limitations and opportunities are appreciated, is considered as a realistic way to (i) *create* a lifestyle of *tinkering* with materials and ideas, or (ii) *manipulate* one's way of living, lifestyle, through home improvement projects (Atkinson, 2006). DIY encourages individuals at all levels of ability to feel empowered and connected with their own skills, visions and often with other people as a shared leisure-time activity. As a creative practice that does not require domain-specific formal training, it can satisfy the need to *do something useful* in non-work time, and the possibility of experiencing optimal happiness, supporting the notion of *flow*.

As DIYers themselves change, developing knowledge and competence, more adventurous projects can provide further challenge and change. Responding to increasing popularity of DIY practice, contemporary tools and materials make

engagement with DIY projects accessible to those without trade skills, likewise hardware stores supply items, ideas and *how to* information. The practice of DIY home renovation, interpreted through the French translation of bricolage, *most beneficially* influences lifestyle through the interpretation of bricolage as a type of creativity that is generally free of domain specificity, one that embraces the value of materials and imagination through resourcefulness and improvisation. Lifestyle creation or manipulation is not necessarily the goal of doing but integral to the activity and subsequent experience of living with change.

In chapter 3, popular culture and the media were shown to present the practice of home renovation and DIY in an artificially appealing light. Images of *ideal* homes build expectations of brighter futures, fuel consumption trends and social aspiration. Focusing on situations that illustrate maximum benefit for minimum input, resources are compressed so the transformations are *instant*; require few materials, tools or skills. Assuming the audience to be consumers, everything is available for purchase to make the practice easier, and increasing accessibility to tools and materials and also *how to* information. Conversely, a number of studies report that renovation television programmes are misleading, adventurous projects are made to seem easy and in doing so *set people up* for failure, and the how to grounded in the knowledge that *practices create wants*.

1b. Design + lifestyle

Architects, in providing design ideas and detailing the configuration of a three-dimensional building, communicate a vision influenced on the one hand by the client's perception of a future lifestyle, and on the other by their own perception of a desirable lifestyle. Both are subject to the external influences of popular culture, and the trends transmitted by the media. In this sense, designers hold a mirror up to contemporary lifestyle expectations, and also make it possible for clients to have their own version of the refined *designer* homes seen in media images. As architects rarely work as builders, nor accommodate clients as amateur (DIY) builders, the engagement of a designer usually links with the engagement of a

builder, and therefore the bespoke build project produces a level of quality and originality within a set timeframe that informal build projects rarely achieve. This means the client expects to step from one way of living into another without hands on engagement. The perception is then, that lifestyle is the goal of designer intervention and their design; something created or manipulated *by* professionals based on their domain specific knowledge.

In chapter 5, design process is seen to *most beneficially* influence lifestyle when it embraces collaboration and hybridity—applying visioning skills and communication tools to co-design opportunities; facilitating transformation experiences and contributing to hybrid roles, practices and processes of change. Design process shapes the public perception of lifestyle mostly through the production of spaces and places that are not sensitive to the ways people want to live, nor allow for the evolution of the design and continual involvement of stakeholder/client. Although the presentation of clutter-free, new, high quality environments is used by the home product industry to encourage consumption and continual renewal, the designer homes also provide inspiration and ideas for those who are interested in making modest changes to their home and recycling gathered materials.

1c. Design + doing + lifestyle

People engage, to various degrees depending on the pro-am divide, with design process and/or DIY practice mostly through *active* and creative engagement. DIY and design-it-yourself represent a desire to be relatively self-sufficient, and therefore proactive about designing and doing, making, producing and using. The active engagement is often physical (working with tools, drawing, investigating options through trial and error), social (working with others on projects), creative (planning, improvising), and above all transformative. Frequently, participants reported that the process of planning, orchestrating and executing change has been the most transformative aspect of home improvement, rather than the outcome—the occupation of a modified home.

Although *design* and *doing* mostly materialise as active pursuits, there are also aspects of passive engagement with both threads, such as watching lifestyle television programmes, browsing magazines for design ideas, viewing display homes, strolling round DIY stores or driving past real estate signs. In this way, individuals are able to *absorb* the design input of others in other places/locations and *imagine* a better way of living in their own place/home, without picking up a single tool.

Where the threads *design* and *doing* are interpreted in the context of professional design and commercial build services, the notion of lifestyle as something generated from engagement with the change-making process is overlooked. So too is the opportunity for transformation in all but the physical sense, the modification of built form. The predominantly linear design-build process is shaped by economic parameters such as high labour rates, which frequently result in the generation of waste material and rigid construction programmes. The non-commercial or amateur equivalent, DIY, has been found to be a less linear more flexible design-build process, one that embraces other types of creativity such as bricolage with associated aspects of resourcefulness and improvisation. Further, as a practice that allows the homeowner to both shape and make their own version of a dream home at their leisure, *Lifestyle DIY* can become a way of living with creativity and transformation.

1d. Lifestyle + having + context

Tension between the inner pressures/motivations, and outer pressures/influences on an individual, has a significant impact their perception: (i) of lifestyle as a way of living connected with the fabric of home, and therefore (ii) that transforming the home will bring about a transformed, and thus better, life.

Motivations based on negativity, such as feelings of frustration with clutter and nowhere to entertain, and inadequacy such as being left behind or labelled old fashioned, were found to be powerful motivators of change. In part this was seen

to be about the *maintenance of front* (social factor) as well as a personal struggle with the ideal (via glossy images in media) versus real (via everyday experience) of home, the home that is *lived in* versus the home that *for living* in.

In addressing the tension between outer and inner pressures, through engaging designers and/or contractors as hire-renovators, or engaging in DIY practice, people demonstrated that change to the home was *expected* to change the way of life. Designers, when briefed by a client on the physical requirements the home, are not always made aware of *all of* the underlying issues behind home modification.

Research question 2

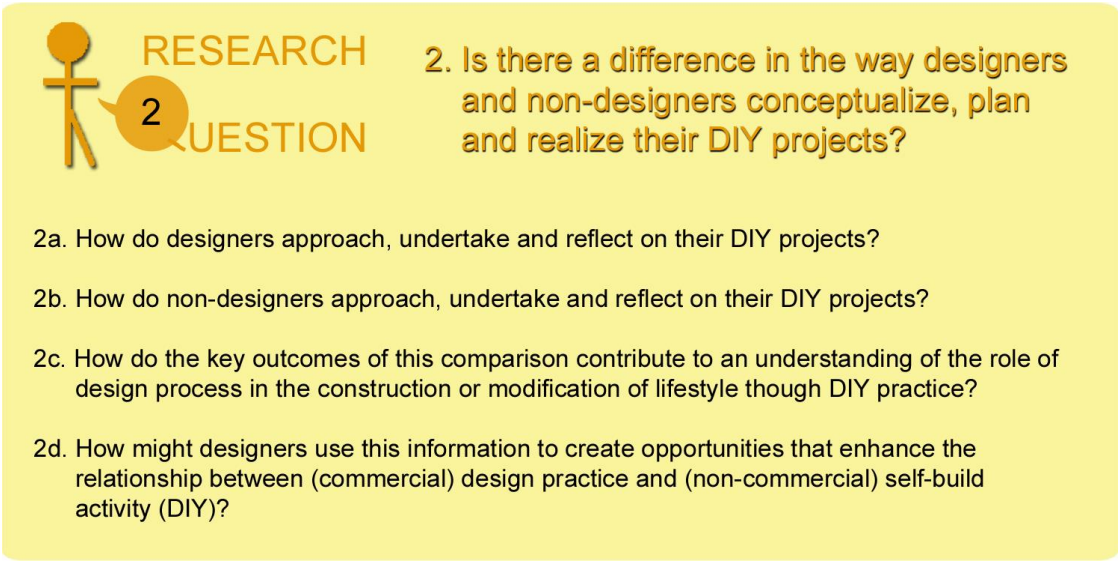


Figure 6.2: Research question 2 and sub-questions

2. Overarching question – design + doing + having

Investigating the practices of *design*, *doing* and *having*, particularly through narratives of DIY projects, revealed considerable variation between individuals in relation to their knowledge, skills, competence, conceptualising ability, vision, planning and build process. When comparing the three case study participants, there were clear differences in the way DIY projects went from inception to completion: (i) between the designers and the non-designer, and (ii) between the designer who, as an architect, had greater domain-specificity to the situation than the other designer who was not an architect.

The findings indicated that the more *domain specific* the design training, the more closely the design-then-build process follows the specific sequence used in that domain. For example, the conceptualisation stage for an architect (Fleetwood) was dominated by typical concept and design development drawings, followed by the build stage. For the non-designer (Lotus), the conceptualisation took the form of a montage of images taken from non-design sources to interpret a plan provided by a design professional, followed by building work. For the designer without specific architectural training (Jasper), the design-build process was less linear, more iterative, a combination of montage and visioning sketches produced between and throughout demolition and build events. Creativity without domain specificity was seen to generate opportunities for innovation and improvisation.

2a. Design + doing

For the designers in this study, the approach to DIY is strongly influenced by their design training, the skills (e.g. conceptualisation, visioning) and tools they use in their work (e.g. sketching, Photoshop, scaled drawings) and their experience with three-dimensional spatial configuration. The extent to which it influenced the process appears partly due to the distance between the subject matter of their design work, and their knowledge of building construction, to include project management, techniques and finishes. The closer the focus of work and site of DIY, the closer the designer followed patterns of work throughout the DIY project, such as developing a concept that addresses constraints and opportunities, drawing up design plans, working through construction details.

Generally, the designers in this study have approached the *doing* aspect of their projects with a design scheme more-or-less resolved. Unlike work-based projects where design precedes work on site, architect Fleetwood, the architect began demolition work before design work *on an impulse*. The mess resulting from the *undoing* became a provocation for the *doing*, however at that stage the architect reverted to the *usual* pattern of work—and completed the design before commencing the build (doing).

The way designers apply skills and mirror the roles of their work also depends upon the resources they have, and what they are. One designer, Jasper, had a partner who was also a designer involved in the DIY project and thus co-designed and collaborated on the build. Using a bricolage method they utilised recycled materials, which in turn also acted as the provocation for projects. The other designer, Fleetwood, worked solo and had high expectations of the build, expecting to achieve the standard achieved on his client's projects even though he was not an experienced tradesman himself. He specifically bought all materials required to ensure the build conformed to his design and budget.

2b. Non-design + doing

As for designers, but perhaps more so, for non-designers the method of working through a DIY project depended on the relevance of their training and experience, the extent to which skills and tools were applicable or transferable, and the resources available to them. Non-designers also engaged with bricolage. Unable to draw on formal design knowledge, participants such as Lotus used resources *to hand* including publications and images to help them visualise possibilities, tinkered with ideas and *how to* information, and generally displayed a less domain-specific form of creativity.

Some non-designers appeared to be aware of their limitations in terms of producing imaginative or original compositions, and were more prepared to request assistance and verification in terms of what others thought *looked right*. As such they engaged in co-creation discussions with people whose opinions they valued, including people working in hardware retail or supply stores, or contractors if they were hire-renovators. Other participants were content to rely on their own creativity and judgement about design issues.

Many non-designers had insubstantial spatial awareness, for example, uncomfortable working with scale on drawings and not understanding proportion in

three-dimensional spaces, however, this was often overcome using a trial and error process on site.

2c. Design + lifestyle

Although individuals without design capability find a workable solution, they may not come up with one that matches their imagination, the images they have cut from magazines, or seen on television makeover shows. It is possible that falling short of their expectations might discourage further DIY projects, and instead revert to unimaginative R&M activity, the replacement of existing. At the other end of the spectrum, people have high expectations of the outcome produced by a designer, and it is possible that again their expectations are not met—in this situation people are often reluctant to engage designers again. Individuals in both scenarios may feel their lifestyle aspirations are not met.

Engaging a designer traditionally distances the client from the creative decision-making process and ideation, even though they are usually consulted on a regular basis for responses to proposals. The designer does not undertake ethnographic investigation prior to design; instead the perception of a client's current way of life and future aspirations of lifestyle are conveyed through conversations during the briefing stage of the design process. There is no reason why, theoretically, designers cannot consult on DIY projects to supplement the client's creativity, or formulate surveys or ethnographic tools to better understand a client's expectations. Mostly, as a service, design consultancy is cost-prohibitive for DIYers, who often are intent on being resourceful with most things except their own time. Also, the *creative* part of a project, *shopping for design ideas*, is the part of DIY that many participants have enjoyed as much as, sometimes more, than the building part of the project.

Greater familiarity with design process would enable a DIYer to explore more conceptual options *before* starting the build; if the build starts with only one idea considered, subsequent ideas are often disregarded. Being able to work with scale

plans and elevations and produce three-dimensional sketches may assist a DIYer to *table* and talk over the idea(s) with other stakeholders (including family) and take on board their suggestions. Designers acknowledge that drawing helps them *think* through issues as well as communicating with others.

2d. Design + lifestyle

Given the difficulty of conveying intangible aspects of a dream during the normal briefing process between client and designer, the designer is presented with a list of wants or needs. In order to broaden design practice and embrace a lifestyle-oriented understanding of client needs and wants (concept tailored to their domain), research tools such as the lifestyle survey, similar to the one developed for this study, could provide a more design *with* anthropology oriented understanding about the client, their patterns of living and their household dynamics.

Design participants reported that clients often table glossy magazine or book images of dream homes as part of their brief, and that it was difficult to investigate beyond the typical aspirational images presented. As participants have indicated, perceptions of *ideal* include comfort and space, nebulous terms. Other tools used in the survey include the sketching childhood and current homes, the visual exercise facilitating reflection on aspects of home that hold value, such as neighbours, particular trees, or configurations of rooms.

Applying models of creativity and aspects of practice theory makes it possible to take a broader approach to the activity of home improvement, useful in focusing more closely on user requirements and on future ways of living with new build projects. Using a range of tools, designers would be better able to inform on several possible futures and produce a design with built-in flexibility.

There is evidence that DIY can produce a greater bond with a home (self-place), and for some it creates a greater sense of self-sufficiency. There is opportunity for designers to engage more directly on home renovation projects and embrace

collaborative approaches to the design and build process, experimenting with co-creative teams, such as a builder who contributes to design, a client who contributes to the build. The designer can play a greater role in home modification than they currently do, but rather than *expert* on the outside, moving to the inside as *collaborator*, observing that "design should not prescribe or predict, but enable" (Scheldeman, 2012, p. 64).

Commercial design and build projects rarely recycle materials unless they require little in the way of adaptation. Generally materials are ordered specifically for projects plus extra volume to account for anticipated *wastage*, with up to five percent of building materials are discarded on a commercial project. Embracing bricolage as a part of the designers' role would encourage the appropriation and remodelling of building wastage and other discarded objects/materials as a part of the design process.

Taking the notion of lifestyle as a dreamscape, complex and deeply embedded in human behaviour, presents designers and design professions with a conceptual model by which to *challenge taken for granted assumptions*. Developing greater connectivity between the roles of dreamer, dream maker and dream shaper will reduce the boundaries, gaps and cracks between the interests of separate stakeholders.

6.2 Thesis outcomes

Thesis as bricolage

The study has explored *bricolage*, both as a *set of blended practices* and as a *multi-layered methodology*. The thesis structure aims to reflect the two key layers of the study and reveal a bricolage style conversation between research methods and data, between tools and materials, between the methodology and the subject focus of the research:

(i) *Bricolage as methodology* embraces the complexity that results from the multidimensional nature of situated knowledge. It is a multi-paradigm, multi-method, interdisciplinary methodology and is well suited both to design research and in particular to this study, where alternative theoretical approaches have provided multiple understandings of the social world.

(ii) *Bricolage as practice* emerges as self-assembly collage method by which lifestyle may be constructed or modified through activity focused on altering the fabric of the home. As a style of practice, bricolage plays an important part in the lives of the participants, in my role as participant researcher and also as reflective design practitioner.

Documenting a study in this style typically means creating an *emergent construction*, a "complex, dense, reflexive, collage-like creation" (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, pp. 2-3); one that provides a conceptual understanding across and within disciplines, paradigms, research methods and practices (Gray & Malins, 2004; Groat & Wang, 2002). A collage is created as information and methods are drawn in to the study and used as they come to hand.

Proponents of research bricolage, Joe Kincheloe and Kathleen Berry, suggest this collage-style outcome, a POET, written from one or more fields of study and frames of reference, and threading the study "though a variety of conceptual maps" (2008, p. 33), creates "a state of turbulence, a disequilibrium that reflects a healthy feature of complexity and autopoiesis" (2008, p. 34). The thesis is therefore both a POET and work of bricolage, weaving layers of knowledge into a complex cloth of many textures and colours, responding to the complexity of participant lives under transformation, where lifestyle emerges as a quilt woven from threads, from practices and processes, people and relationships, places and possibilities.

In terms of methodology, as a POET or work of bricolage, this thesis has only begun to explore the contribution bricolage methodology can make to design researchers

and practitioners in one area of interest, the construction and modification of lifestyle. Alternative models, alternative participant groups and alternative DIY projects would expand the range and analysis of data, further testing the inquiry concept and contributing to the overlap between design and anthropology, and indeed to the emerging field of design anthropology itself.

Research on everyday practices

This research began with the notion that lifestyle is *used and abused* by retail and real estate industries. I found a mismatch between the media and their audience. The concept of lifestyle as a symbol of status is frequently manipulated in favour of optimisation rather than to satisfice for commercial gain, chiefly to fuel consumption in the search for aspirational *goals*; the *ideal life* is portrayed as a bigger house, a new kitchen, a luxury bathroom. For the public, or specifically the small network of people contributing to this study, lifestyle relates instead to personal and social *values*. Lifestyle embraces individual and collective ongoing actions and activities that define and enrich participant lives in the long term, not something to be bought or crossed off a list.

In the western world, we are encouraged to lead sustainable, healthy and balanced lifestyles, but in reality our lives are far from this. The study looked into the making and re-making, the shaping and modifying, the dreams and realities of *everyday* lifestyles, and how designers might facilitate others to achieve a more balanced, harmonious and positive way of living. Using research tools like mapping relationships and interpretative analysis, design psychology exercises and ethnographic or field observation, designers can learn to better engage with non-designers in more collaborative roles. Transformation design is just one branch of the field already working towards co-creation and co-design practices.

The study reflects on the differences in *pro* and *am* processes, the tendency toward hybrid roles and importance of social relations in the creative practice of DIY as a way of living with transformation. As a designer engaged in home renovation as

well as research, the outcome(s) have indicated that designers (researcher and practitioners) have a more valuable role to play in facilitating:

- the creation of experiences not products (design),
- enable people to create (co-design/collaborate) own experiences (doing),
- aim at values rather than goals, transformation not gratification (all threads),
- focus on long-term self-actualization/self-place bond with home (context), and
- alternative/innovative ways of engaging with the material world through re-working materials, recycle and exchange (practice threads).

This study then explored the notion of lifestyle as a design influenced way of living, and DIY as a creative practice centred on home and self-improvement as a way to transform lifestyle. By mapping the relationship between the design, build and consumption roles of the DIY enthusiast—the hybrid practitioner, the study also looked at the active engagement of skills and competence required to undertake each role.

The focus shifted from themes to the person at the centre of the transformation process, the DIY practitioner as creator and maker, as they actively construct a bridge between the life they lead and the life they want. In undertaking this research, it was hoped to take a small step towards exploring the creeping issue of our unsustainable lifestyles, by asking how and why we engage in the deliberate making and re-making of our home environment, over and over—what is it that we are searching for?

Lifestyle; a process of re-construction

Discussion on lifestyle in this thesis, as for DIY and design process, bears witness to periods of dissonance and indeterminacy, together with moments of control, order, resolution and *flow*. Taken in isolation, these three processes reveal incomplete

patterns of activity, made more complete, in this study at least, through the resourcefulness of practitioners as bricoleurs, collaborators making the best of the situation to hand. Lifestyle emerged as a hybrid blend of process, people, place and practice, influenced and influencing the evolution of needs and wants and provocations, problems and practicalities. Above all, investigating the self-modification of lifestyle has revealed the total inter-relatedness of all that we do, as humans and weavers, natural improvisers, and as engineers of experience.

Lifestyle *with* design, at least in conceptual terms, has to be divorced from any notion of stasis, deconstructed, and remodeled. Throughout the study, the research concept was reconstructed numerous times, finally repositioning lifestyle as the cycle of transformation, with the hybrid practitioner front and the centre, as the weaver of threads. The design consultant has been repositioned as the facilitator of creativity, collaborating and co-designing with the client (as hybrid practitioner), helping them on a journey to self-actualization in the process of establishing a self-place. Working together in combination not in separate sequences, provides a greater opportunity to improvise during both the design and the build stages. Interwoven practices have allowed the hybrid practitioner greater flexibility in using resources as they come to hand, bricolage style, complimented by the designer who is skilled at conceptualising and three-dimensional composition.

Through the environmental autobiographies, visual records, narratives and insights of the participants in this study, there is evidence that people can experience self-actualization both internally, and in relation to their home as their self-place. Greater levels of self-awareness, confidence and contentment can be gained through engaging in transformational practices within and without, rather than living a life constrained by cultural, physical and aesthetic mores, or constructed by *others*. Participant experiences have countered the usual notion of DIY as a male dominated amateur building activity, moved the inquiry beyond weekends in a shed tinkering with tools and beyond the production of clunky, cobbled together solutions that simply *make do*. DIY emerges as a mode of behaviour deeply

connected to our creativity, our search for self-place, our desire for both stability and change (growth), and our need to connect with others.

Finally, having reflected on the vast area of underutilised knowledge about home making and modifying behaviour, the study has briefly stepped into a landscape of opportunity available to designers. As *enablers* or *facilitators* of experience, designers are well positioned to explore co-design, hybrid and bricolage practices. Furthermore, avenues such as *transformation design* have the potential to enhance the way we live and add value to what it means to be freely human rather than dictating how we live in the world, our world, our self-place of social and personal relations.

6.3 Future research projects

Although the various formats of the construction industry persist in unsustainable development models, there is a significant opportunity for investigating alternative forms and models of practice that embrace collaboration between the designer, builder and client. Focusing research on the potential of bricolage as a *set-breaking* type of creativity would assist in moving beyond traditional the linear design-build process and separation of roles. This would aim to develop professional practice (and architectural training) methods that enhance improvisation rather than limit it through domain specificity.

There is room to explore the transference of skills beyond traditional processes and methods, for example, a return to craft guild formats based on exchange or barter or apprenticeships in cross-disciplinary practice. Creative apprenticeships may assist in developing a hybrid approach to the training of design professionals. Although design training is already lengthy and challenging, greater understanding of client expectations and stakeholder involvement is required. Co-creative and co-design projects at university, between disciplines (such as sociology and anthropology), industries (building, suppliers, retail) and stakeholders (public,

clients, families), would increase opportunities for students to gain a better understanding of the context within which they work as *dreamshapers*. Similarly, emerging fields such as design anthropology would be a valuable addition to design education and practice, informing the dynamic and complex nature of human life, for example, suggesting students explore their own environmental autobiographies to gain an understanding of self-place aspirations.

Designers have begun to involve *users* in the build process; however, there is resistance to relinquish control over design decisions, or spend time looking for broader evidence of interrelated behaviours. Although not everyone can be a *professional* designer, there is an increasing acknowledgement that non-designers can contribute greatly to the design process and quality of design outputs, something that might be explored through co-design DIY projects. There would be much value in exploring social DIY projects to investigate how networks of competence and relations are created, and further how professional design input can contribute to the development of more sustainable lifestyles.

The knowledge generated through this study is a first step towards negotiating a workable definition of lifestyle from a design *with* anthropology perspective, creating the foundation for further research involving the link between current home-making practices and the search for more sustainable lifestyles. This is the first research project to simultaneously examine the gaps that are evident between professional design process and amateur creative practice in relation to modifying home, between idealised and realised concepts of self-place, and between consumptive and transformative behaviour. This research draws on a wide range of sources, methods, theories and perspectives to present an original design research POET. The thesis significantly demonstrates the validity of bricolage and hybridity to both design research and practice, and provides new models for collaborative creativity, and particularly for co-design, relevant to both design professionals and non-designers involved in the modification of home and home life—the lifestyle space.

To end as to began, only transformed:

We renovate[356] our homes; *hoping* they renovate[357] us…
and in the process we, as bricoleurs, facilitate creativity,
lived experience, and a lifestyle of transformation.

[356] To improve by renewing or restoring, remodel.
[357] To impart new vigor to, revive.

Glossary

This glossary provides informal guidelines to terms used in this thesis, together with their provenance and/or dictionary definitions where they illuminate the intention of their use in this context.

authenticity: real or genuine, not copied or false/imitation; a role, product, site, object or even confirmed as original, genuine, real, or trustworthy (E. Cohen & Cohen, 2012).
autotelic: having a purpose in and not apart from itself (1); engagement in activity for its own sake, similar to play.
bricolage: construction achieved by using whatever comes to hand, something constructed in this way. Origin - French from *bricolor* to putter about (1); multiple applications - impromptu use of tools and materials are 'ready to hand'/work of collage/methodology.
bricolage methodology: an approach to method construction, combining methods from the social sciences, humanities, and hard sciences, allowing the design researcher to be methodologically flexible, 'make do' with established research tools, and have the ability to create new tools that enable them to explore questions that are indeterminate, complex and abstract (Yee & Bremner, 2011).
bricoleur: someone who constructs something, to include theories in the case of a research bricoleur, by arranging and rearranging using materials/tools to hand.
building designers: all design professions engaged with the modification of the physical environment.
building game: colloquial expression indicating insider knowledge of the building trade, considered by sub-contractors to be complex (Moore, 1991).
co-creation: any act of collective creativity, with applications ranging from the physical to the metaphysical and from the material to the spiritual (Sanders & Stappers, 2008).
co-design: a specific instance of co-creation. Co-design refers to the creativity of designers and people not trained in design working together in the design development process (Sanders & Stappers, 2008).
cognitive dissonance: psychological discomfort in the presence of inconsistency resulting from comparison with others, where disruption occurs people will seek greater consistency in opinions and action (Festinger, 1983).
context: one of five key threads, in italics to differentiate from normal use of word; external influences driving change-making activity, channeled through with media and popular culture .
design: one of five key threads, in italics to differentiate from normal use of word; formalized process followed by professional building design practitioners, activity focused on conceiving, conceptualising and planning.
design practice: professionally organized practice, where formally trained designers abide by rules imposed by membership of a profession, legislative regulations, and by knowledge specialism.

doing: one of five key threads, in italics to differentiate from normal use of word; self-navigated activity focused on making, realizing and constructing.
do-it-yourself: the activity of doing or making something without professional training or assistance; an activity in which one does something oneself or on one's won initiative (1); self-navigted home improvement or renovation practice, not including repair & maintenance.
dissonance: a lack of agreement, inconsistency between the beliefs one holds or one's actions and one's beliefs (1); lack of harmony and balance.
five capitals system: framework adopted by the Forum of the Future as a basis for discussing value or capital to generate a vision for the future and sustainability (Porrit, 2007).
great australian dream: the dream of home (and land) ownership; the financial and physical security of owning your own home; a domestic ideal that many have aspired to since World War II.
generative: producing ideas, insights and concepts (Sanders & Stappers, 2012).
habitus: both the generative principle of objectively classifiable judgements and the system of classification … of [classifiable] practices (Bourdieu, 1984).
handover: the point at which the worksite (home), is *handed* back to the client having completed the work for them to occupy.
***having*:** one of five key threads, in italics to differentiate from normal use of word; activity focused by internal motivations, wants and needs—acquisition, consumption and possession.
hire renovators: home owners/clients who choose to engage others to do the work, or outsource a substantial amount of the work to contractors, rather than take a DIY approach.
hybrid practitioner: an individual taking on multiple roles, throughout the thesis this generally refers to the three parties involved in a building project—client, designer and builder.
ideation: the capacity for/the act of forming ideas (1); the generation, development and communication of ideas and/or concepts.
inhabitation: an ongoing, evolving relationship with home as opposed to occupation, without engagement.
lebensstil: lifestyle, the culmination of life choice and life chance, as translated from German (Abel 1993; Weber 1922).
lebensfuhrung: life conduct/choice, as translated from German (Abel, 1993; Weber, 1922).
lebenschancen: life chance, as translated from German (Abel, 1993; Weber, 1922).
lifestyle: the typical way of life of an individual, group, or culture (1).
lifestyle: one of five key threads, in italics to differentiate from normal use of word; a workable definition of lifestyle for designers as 'a way of living under continual modification' is the subject of this thesis, refer section 5.5 for full description.
liminal: a space of transition, cultural change and fluidity (Tiwari, 2010).
lived experience: the accumulated experience of everyday life that can be considered in reflection or by recollection, experience already lived through/past.
materiality of practice: the taken-for-granted relation between daily life and the objects that make it possible (Shove, 2007).

McMansion: a derogatory term used to describe a new house considered excessive in size relative to the block, superficially luxurious, and of a mass-produced generic style after McDonalds.
optimise: to make as perfect, effective, or functional as possible (1); optimal decision making/maximizing behaviour, used in contrast to saticficing behavior.
owner-builder: someone who builds on their own property without being a licensed builder.
participatory design: involving stakeholders more fully as participants in the process, largely attributed to increasing pressure for community involvement in decision-making from the 1960s.
plasticity: capacity for being molded or altered (1); varying behaviour according to environment/external conditions.
practice: to do or perform often, customarily, or habitually (1).
practice theory: body of work about the work of the body… a loose network of approaches to social theory that takes the human body to the nexus of 'arrays of activities', i.e. practices (Postill, 2010); the relation between human and the material and the social environment (Kuutti, 2011); theory of practice(s) and practice theory are used as interchangeable terms in this thesis.
pro-am: contraction of professional – amateur.
pro-am divide: perceived gap in skills/knowledge/outputs between a professional (or 'expert') and an amateur.
recycle: to make something new from something used before/to use something again (1).
regenerative design: an intentional practice ... about finding and fostering the true essence of a place and unlocking its potential … discovering relationships, connections and patterns (Biohabitats, 2014)
repurpose: to change something so it can be used for a different purpose (1).
saticficing: decision-making strategy where optimal situation cannot be determined, bounded rationality (Simon, 1956); not perfect or ideal but sufficient for the purpose.
self-actualization: highest level of needs according to Maslow's model of needs, reaching a true sense of balance, well-being and self-fulfillment (Huitt, 2007).
self-place: person and place in harmony, a place meeting both basic and deeper existential needs (Israel, 2003).
space of lifestyle: the represented social world … constituted … in the relationship between the two capacities [work/practices/products/taste and the ability to choose between them] which define habitus (Bourdieu, 1984).
threads: five key topics running through thesis—context, having, doing, design and lifestyle—written in italics to differentiate from normal use of words.
transformation design: the conscious and collaborative process of change to the physical, cultural and social environment (Sangiorgi, 2011).
transition design: design-led societal change aimed at transforming lifestyles, seeking a more sustainable future by holistically addressing issues encompassed by the five capital system (Kossoff, 2011).
upcycle: to convert waste material(s) or discarded items into items with greater value (Goldsmith, 2009).

user-centred design: taking the needs/wants/behaviour of the end user into greater account than traditional design processes, however, still privileges the role of the designer as the 'expert' delivering the final outcome to stakeholders.
verstehen: an intuitive doctrine or method of interpreting human culture especially in its subjective motivational and valuational aspects through the understanding of symbolic relationships. Origin – German from *verstehen* to understand (1); understanding the meaning of action from the actor's point of view, entering into the shoes of the other (2); a methodological pluralism in which different approaches to social scientific understanding are justified relative to the purposes and the context of inquiry (Martin, 2000)

Sources (unless author or otherwise indicated):
(1) Merriam-Webster on-line dictionary.
(2) On-line dictionary of the social sciences

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Appendices

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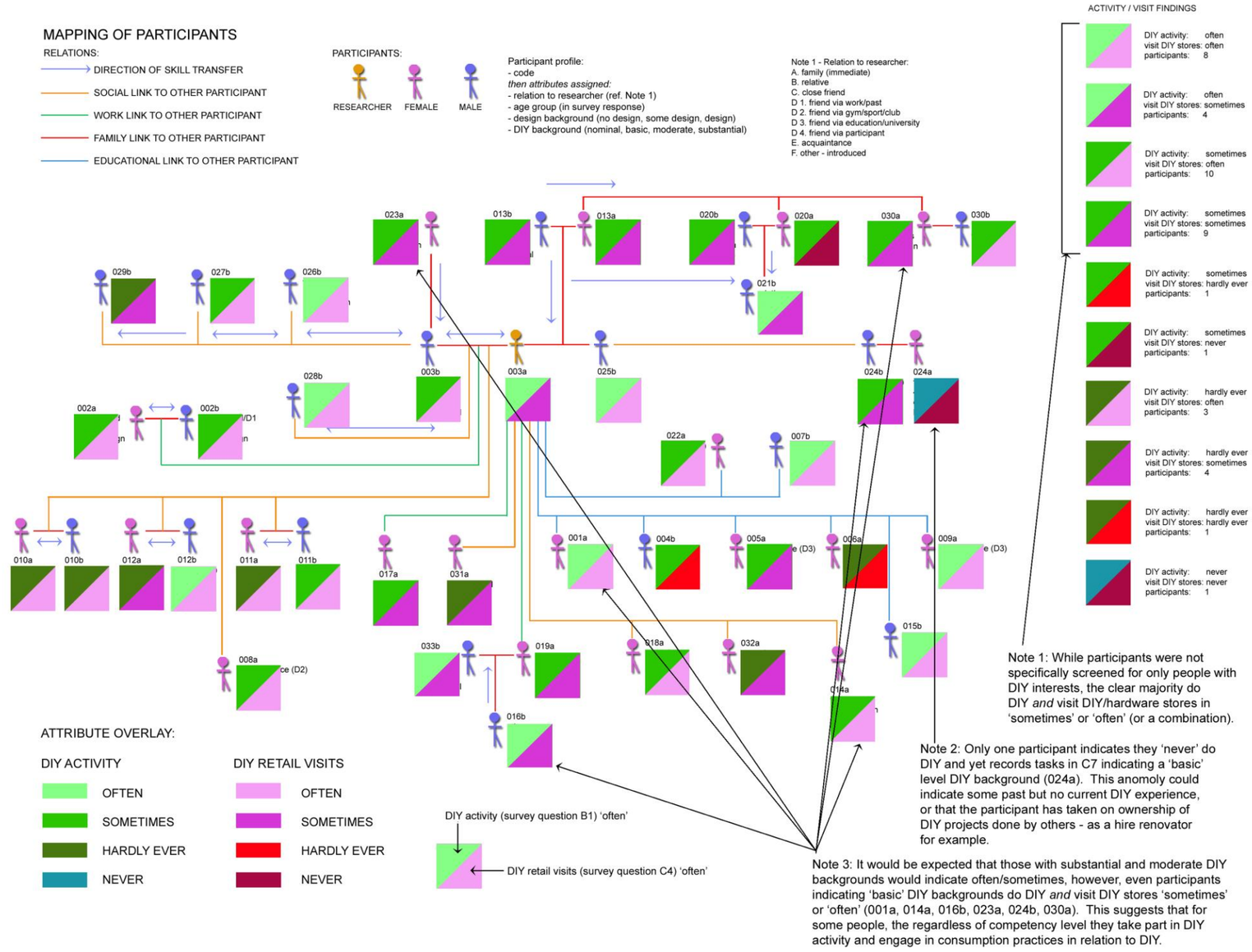
1	Participant map 2 – patterns of leisure activity oriented to DIY (A3)
2	Participant map 3 – DIY status + roles (A3)
3	Participant map 4 – interior styling ability (A3)
4	Bricolage related resources/models
5	Health lifestyles paradigm (adapted)
6	Habitus and the space of lifestyles
7	Participant media sample 2 – skill guides
8	Survey data categories (by question) relevant to study threads
9	Subcontracting and DIY compared – roles/practice

PARTICIPANT DATA MAPPED: PATTERNS OF LEISURE ACTIVITY ORIENTED TO DIY

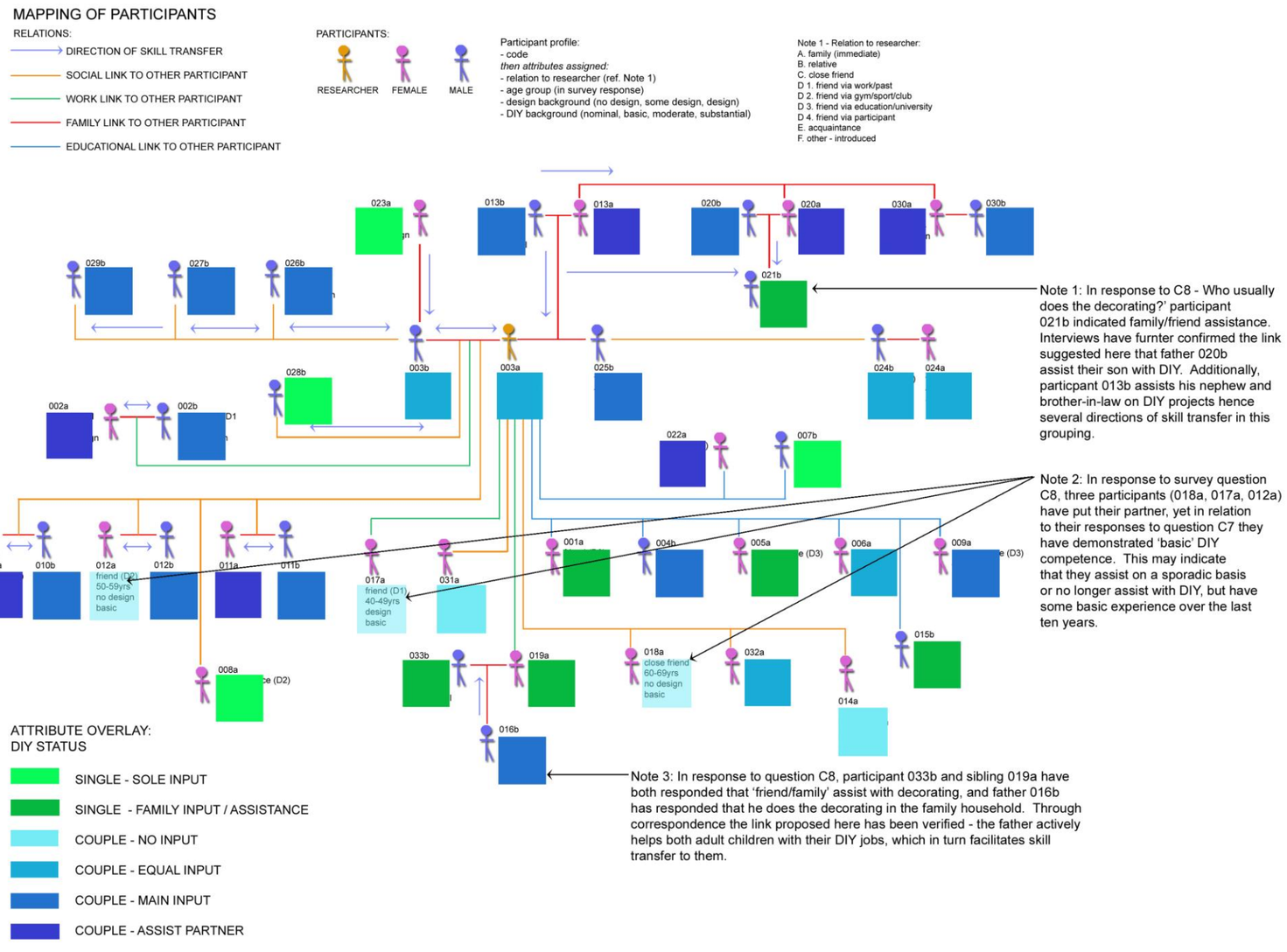
DATA OBTAINED FROM SURVEY QUESTIONS: QB1 - FREQUENCY OF DIY, QC4 - FREQUENCY OF DIY STORE VISITS



Appendix 1:
Participant map - 2

PARTICIPANT DATA MAPPED: DIY STATUS + ROLES

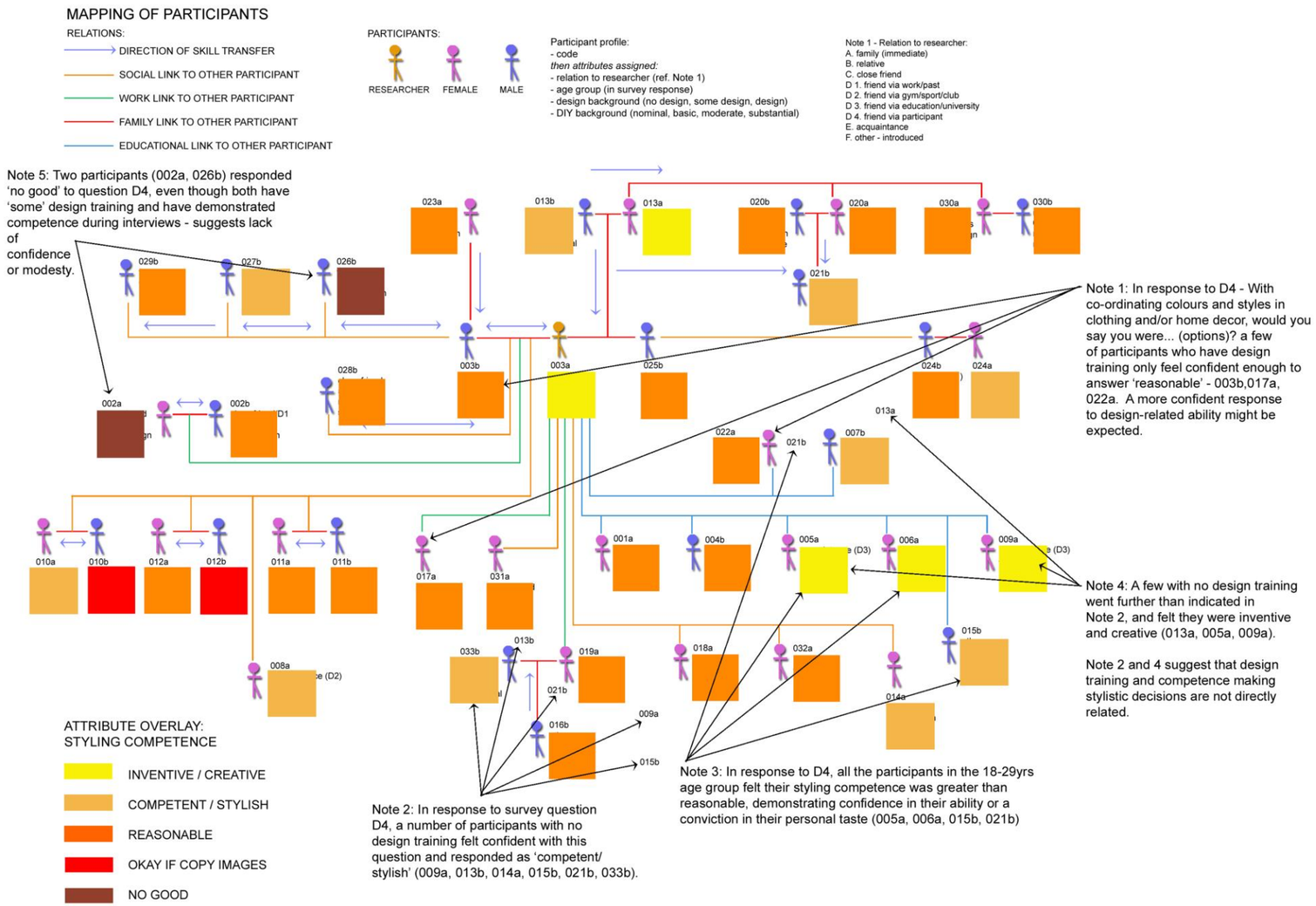
DATA OBTAINED FROM SURVEY QUESTIONS: QF7 - MEMBERS OF HOUSEHOLD, QC8 - RESPONSIBILITY FOR DECORATING/DIY



Appendix 2:
Participant map 3

PARTICIPANT DATA MAPPED: INTERIOR STYLING ABILITY

DATA OBTAINED FROM SURVEY QUESTIONS: QD4 - SELF ASSESSMENT ON INTERIOR STYLING ABILITY



Appendix 3:
Participant map 4

Appendix 4: Bricolage related resources/models

Tables/Figures:

4a: Literature on bricolage most relevant to study
4b: Main models/tools applied generating bricolage
4c: Key contributors to initial topic (later threads) development
4d: Terminology field at initial stage of inquiry
4e: Diagram - terms at centre and perimeter of inquiry

4a: Literature on bricolage most relevant to study:

Commentators applying 'bricolage'	
Author:	*Publication date (books unless noted):*
Don Norman & Roberto Verganti***	2011 'Incremental & Radical Innovation' (paper)
Joyce Yee & Craig Bremner**	2011 'Methodological bricolage' (paper)
Joyce Yee	2007, 2010 (papers)
Joe Kinchloe**	2001, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2008 (papers)
Dick Hebdidge	2008 'Subculture: Meaning of style'
Ainslie Lardley	2008 'Piecing Together – a Methodological Bricolage'
Y. Lincoln, P. McLaren, W. Pinar, J. Kinchloe**	2001 Qual. Inquiry (special issue) Dec. 2001 (papers)
Karl Weick	2001 'Making sense of the Organisation'
Norman Denzin & Yvonna Lincoln**	1994, 2000, 2002, 2006 'Handbook of Qualitative Research' 1998, 2008 'Strategies of Qualitative Research'
Sherry Turkle	1995 'Life on the Screen'
Seymour Papert & Idit Harel	1991 'Constructionism' (book, ch1) 'learning by making'
Sherry Turkle & Seymour Papert	1990 'Epistemological pluralism' (paper)
Weinstein & Weinstein	1991 'George Simmel: Social flaneur bricoleur'
Clifford Geertz	1988 'Works and lives'
Gilles Deleuze & Felix Guattari	1972 'Anti-Oedipus
Jacques Derrida	1966/1978 trans 'Writing & Difference'*
Claude Levi-Strauss	1962/1966 trans 'Savage Minds'
* commentary on Levi-Strauss' use of term ** valuable contribution on bricolage methodology as applied to this study *** valuable contribution to application of bricolage to design discussion	

4b: Main models/tools applied generating bricolage:

Key model or tool (alphabetical)	Typology	Proponent (selected e.g.)	Location (chapter)
Abductive sensemaking process	Synthesis map	Kolko	2
Activity records	Mapping tracery	Grey	4
AECP	Survey – everyday culture	Bennett/Frow/ Emmisson	2
CoCS (check)	Survey - consumption	Shove	3
Creativity	Competence scale	Sanders	3, 4
Design behaviour	Approaches to problem solving	Cross, Dorst	3
Design psychology	Analysis - self-place exercises	Israel	2, 5
Diagrams, sketches	Mapping 2D and 3D issues	Various	Throughout
Diagramatic relational conceptualisation	Synthesis; mapping hermeneutic intepretation	Various	Throughout
Dimensional structure	Analysis	Grey	2
Flow/chronology charts	Mapping progress, systems	Grey, Shove, Wilson, Amabile, Cockerham	3, 4, 5
Hierarchy of needs	Scale chart	Maslow, Israel	3, 5
Matrices	Mapping combined issues	Grey, Le Loarne, Unsworth, Norman & Verganti	2, 3, 4, 5
Mind maps	Mapping connections	Grey	2, 3, 4
POET	Methodology - bricolage	Kinchloe	2
Skills	Competence scale	Dreyfus, Dorst	2, 4
Spatial	Framework – georgraphic/political	Taylor	2, 5
Social	Framework - reciprocity	Sahlins	2
Systems model of creativity	Mapping creativity/model	Csikszentmihalyi	2, 5
Thematic networks	Analysis – coded data interpretation/meaning	Stirling	2

Note: There is no specific model of practice(s), hence this research moves towards the development of a conceptual model useful for designers.

4c: Key contributors to initial topic (later threads) development:

Topic/ Thread:	Contributor(s):	Relevance (primary publication/subject area):
Lifestyle	Alan Tomlinson	lifestyle, identity and visible consumption (1990)
	Pierre Bourdieu	concepts of habitus and distinction (1989a)
	Micheal Sobel	lifestyle and social structure (1981)
	Derek Wynne	lifestyle and middle class leisure (1998)
	David Bell & Joanne Hollows	historicizing lifestyle (2006)
Context	Bruno Latour	modernity and hybridity (1993)
	Marcel Mauss	concepts of kinship and status (1950)
	Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi	Identities invested in valued possessions (1996)
	Gareth Palmer	lifestyle in media (2008)
Having	Grant McCracken	consumption-oriented activities (1988)
	Mike Savage	culture, consumption and lifestyle (2001)
	Alan Warde	consumption, appropriation and practice (2005, 2010)
	Daniel Miller	culture and consumption (1987a)
	Manuel Castells	networks, economy, distinctive cultures (1996)
	Celia Lury	survey of consumer culture (1996)
	Thorstein Vleben	theory of conspicuous consumption (1899)
	George Simmel	expression of consumption, role of leisure class (1963, 1997)
Doing	Colin Campbell	craft consumption (2005)
	Robert Stebbins	Serious leisure (2007)
	Phillip Vannini & John Taggart	Do-it-yourself or do-it-with?(2013)
	Richard Sennett	craftwork (2008)
	Michael Crawford	craft and production (2009)
	Tim Ingold	creativity and cultural improvisation (2007)
Design	Bruno Latour	meaning and re-design (2008)
	Donald Schon	reflective practitioner (1983)
	Elizabeth Sanders	co-creation (2008), convivial toolbox (2012)
	Don Norman	Incremental and radical innovation (2011), emotional design (2004)
	Brian Lawson	design expertise (2009)
	Nigel Cross	designerly ways of knowing (2006)
	Elizabeth Shove	design of everyday things (2007)
	Harvey Molotch	designer's background, meaning of 'stuff' (2003)
	Judy Attfield	how objects are selected (1995)

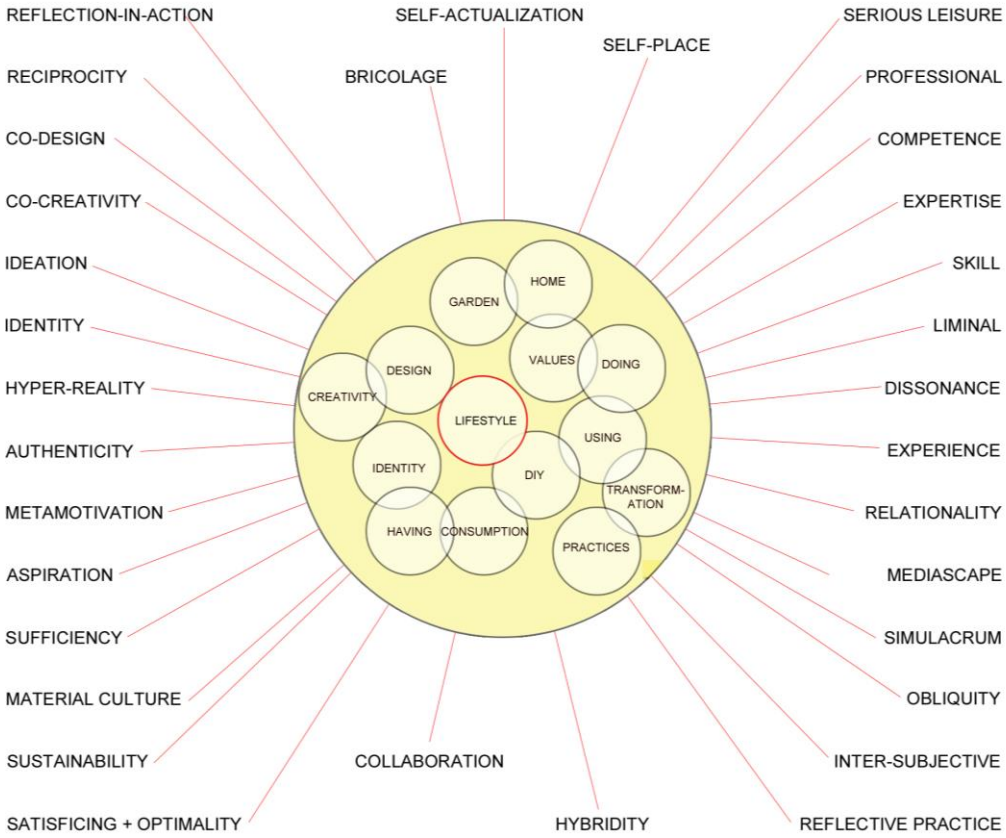
Please note: This table is by no means indented as a comprehensive list of sources used in the production of this thesis, but a preliminary list that assisted in defining the research landscape at the outset of the study.

4d: Terminology field at initial stage of inquiry

Terminology field at initial stage of inquiry	Related thread(s)*				
	context	having	doing	design	lifestyle
Aspiration	●	●			●
Authenticity	●	●			●
Bricolage			●	●	
Co-creativity				●	
Co-design				●	
Collaboration		●	●	●	
Competence			●	●	
Consumption (+ craft consumption)	●	●			
Creativity				●	
Design process				●	
Dissonance (cognitive dissonance)	●	●			
Experience		●	●	●	
Expertise			●	●	
Hybridity		●	●	●	
Hyper-reality	●	●			
Ideation				●	
Identity	●	●			
Inter-subjective	●	●			
Liminal	●	●			
Material culture	●	●			
Mediascape	●	●			
Metamotivation	●	●			
Obliquity		●			
Practice			●	●	
Professional				●	
Reciprocity		●			
Reflection-in-action				●	
Reflective practice				●	
Relationality		●			
Satisficing (+ optimality)	●	●	●		
Self-actualization		●			●
Self-place	●	●			●
Serious leisure			●		
Simulacrum		●			
Skill			●	●	
Sufficiency	●	●			
Sustainability (+ sustainable development)	●	●			
Tools			●	●	
Transformation	●	●			●
Value		●			●

*Ultimately all contribute to the development of a lifestyle concept for this study

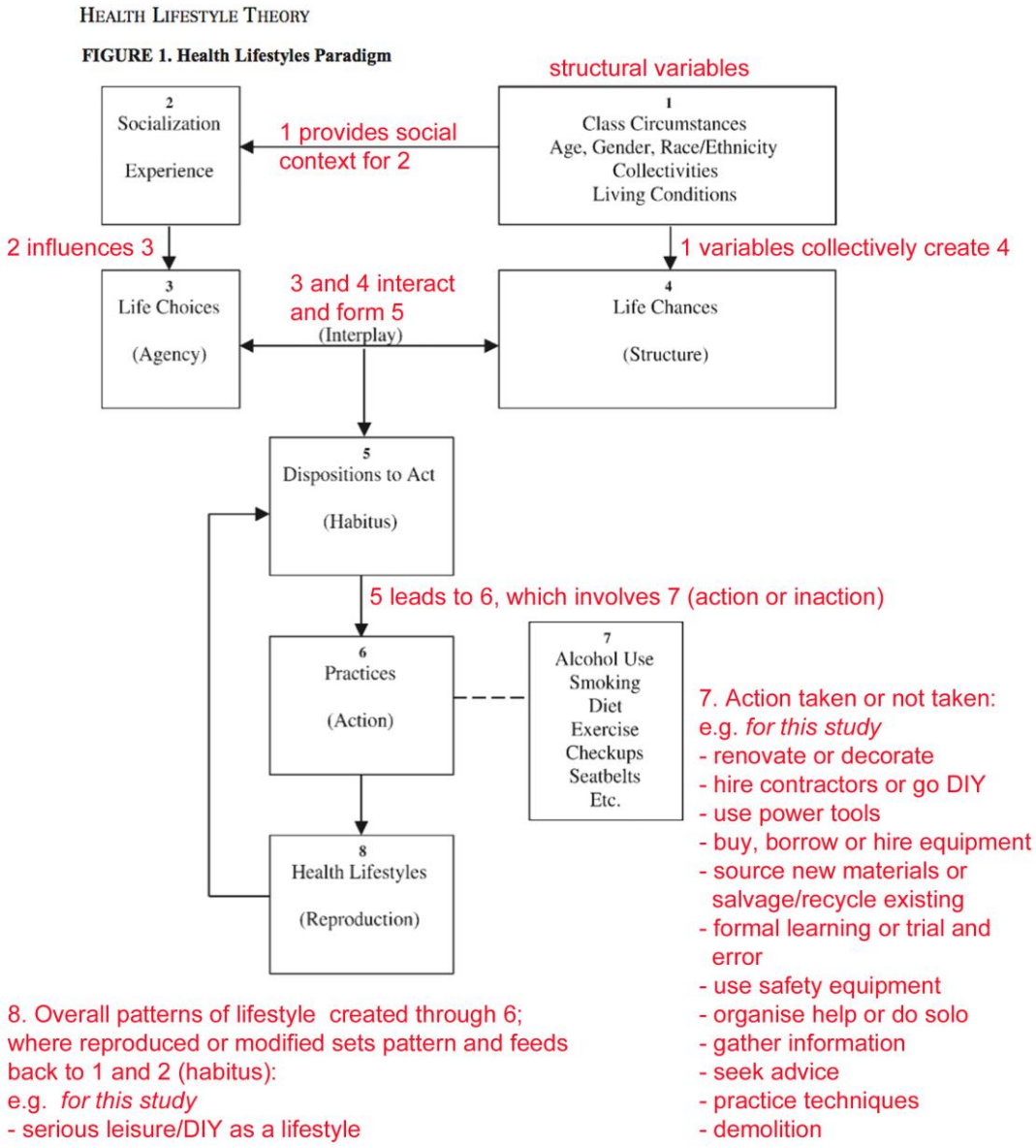
4e: Diagram – terms at centre and perimeter of inquiry



Terms located in foreground (centre) and background (perimeter) emerging at initial stage of inquiry

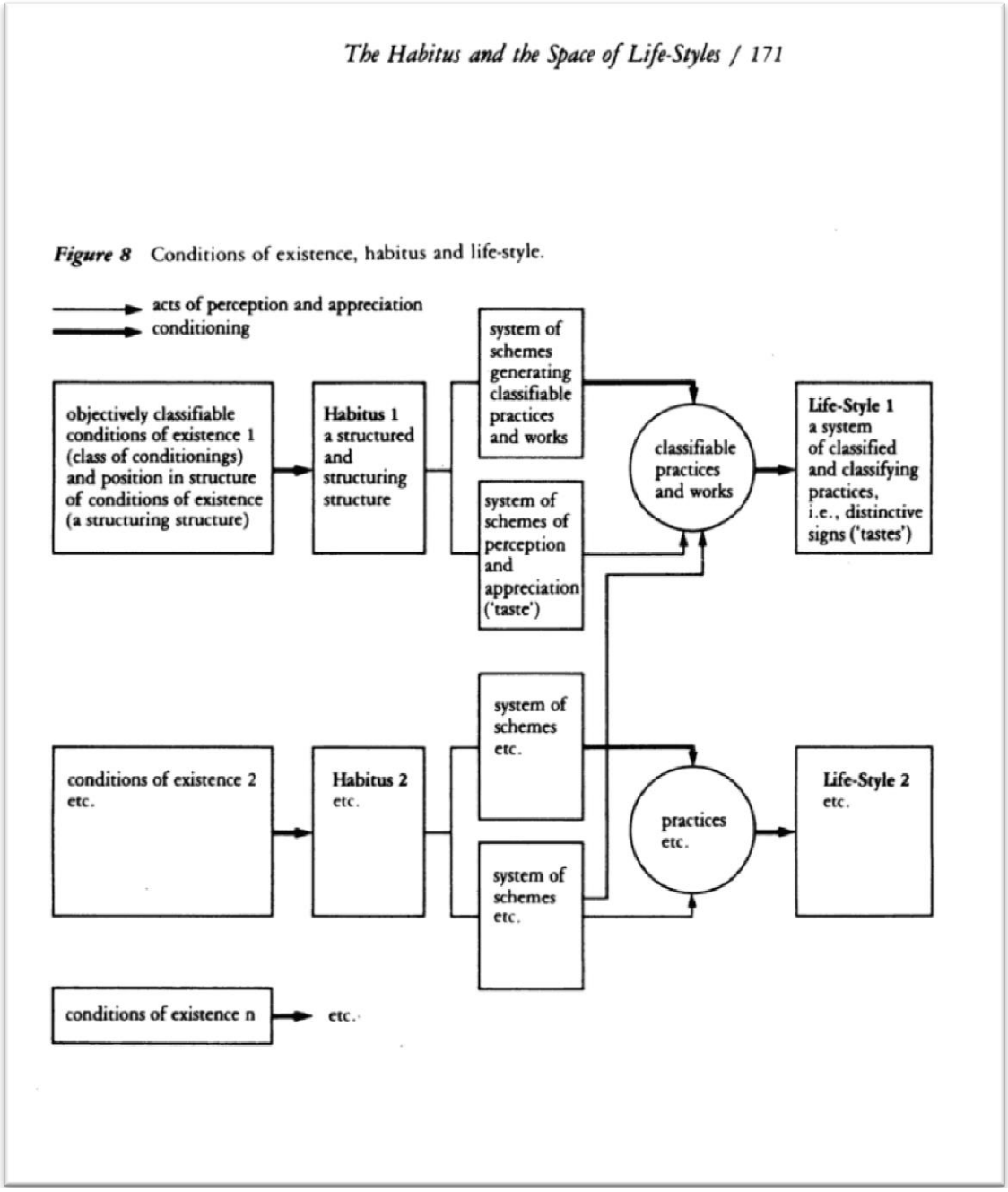
Appendix 5: Health lifestyles paradigm

Model of health lifestyle adapted from Cockerham, 2005, p. 57 “Figure 1: Health Lifestyles Paradigm”, with study specific notes added in red.



Appendix 6: Habitus and the space of life-styles

The habitus and the space of life-style model, from translated edition of Distinction - Bourdieu, 1984, p. 171 “Figure 8: Conditions of existence, habitus and life-style”.



Appendix 7: Participant resource material (media sample 2) – skill guides

Skill level (used to calculate 'DIY background' attribute) determined through a combination of: (a) Participant resource material – skill guides (Appendix 7) and (b) participant first hand experience of the tasks (mainly - Jasper, Paperbark, Rios and Pollywaffle). Media/magazine guides were found to underestimate the level of skill, time and cost.

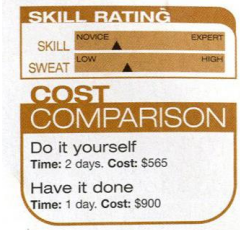
EXTRACT FROM HANDYMAN MAGAZINE DIY PROJECTS

APPENDIX 6E

APPENDIX 6D

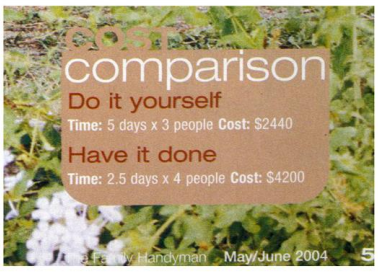
Survey C7 task:	Magazine – issue:	Magazine – skill assessment:
Re-arranged your furniture		
Assembled IKEA furniture	*General assembly:* March 2005 issue (p114)	no skills guide
Putting up shelves	*General hanging:* Sept/Oct 2004 issue (p73)	no skill guide
Making/putting up shelves/curtains/blinds	*General hanging:* Sept/Oct 2004 issue (p73)	no skill guide
	Putting up pelmets: April 2005 issue (p102-105)	Skill guide I
	Making shelf unit: Oct 2005 issue (p30-33)	Skill guide M
	Wall shelves: Oct 2005 issue (p34-36)	Skill guide N
Decorating	*Preparation for painting:*	no skill guide
Laying area of paving (outdoor)	*Concrete driveway:* May/June 2004 issue (p57)	skill guide C
	Lay outdoor paving: Sept 2005 issue (p66-72)	skill guide K
	Cobblestone/brick path: Oct 2005 issue (p105-110)	skill guide O
	Lay concrete paving: Nov 2005 issue (p72-81)	skill guide P
	Brick tree surround: Feb 2006 (p112-118)	Skill guide U
Hanging doors/fitted handles/locks	*French doors:* July/Aug 2004 issue (p58)	skill guide B (under-estimates difficulty)
	Hanging a door: July/Aug 2004 issue (p82-90)	Skill guide J
	Make/install arboured gate: Dec/Jan 2005 issue (p84-85)	Skill guide S
Tiling walls and/or floors	*Bath tub surround:*	skill guide D

EXTRACT SHOWING "SKILL" AND "SWEAT" GUIDE



SKILL GUIDE M

SKILL GUIDE C



EXTRACT SHOWING "SKILL" AND "SWEAT" GUIDE

Tables/Figures:

7a. Figure 4.29 extract – relevance of resource material

7b. Sample detail from guides

7c. Family Handyman magazine skill guides - sample only (A, B, C, F)

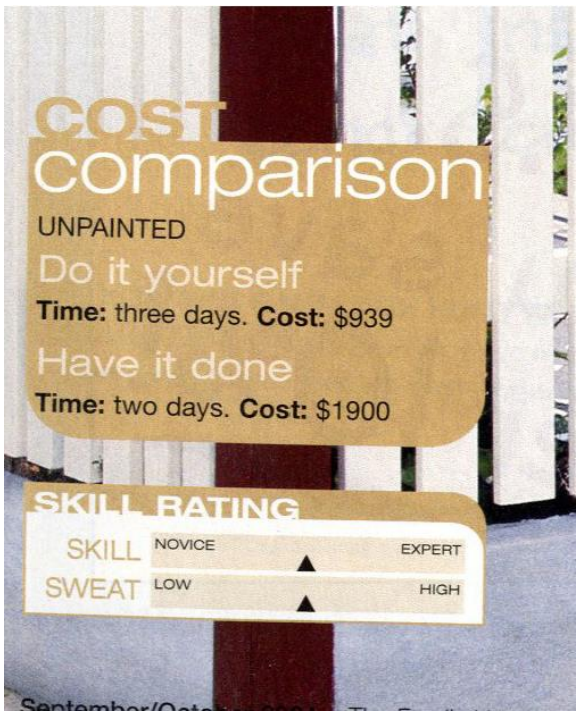
7a. Figure 4:29 extract – relevance of resource material (indicating inclusion of skill guide information)

	Handyman Magazine 2004-6 (project features)							Notes
DIY Tasks			DIY	DIY	By others	By others		* 1 = novice, 10 = expert
	Skill*/10	Sweat**/10	Time (days)	Cost ($)	Time (days)	Cost ($)	Scan Ref	** 1 = low, 10 = high
Re-arranged your furniture								
Assembled IKEA furniture								
Putting up shelves								
Making/putting up curtains/blinds								
Window pelmets	5	3	4hrs	72	2hrs	170	I	SKILL
Shelves	2.7	3.5	2	565	1	900	M	
Tuff shelves	2.6	2.7	1	120	4hrs	300	N	GUIDES
Decorating (painting/wallpaper)								
Recovering furniture								
Make tree bench	1.8	1.8	1.5	189	1	590	F	
Recycle seat	2.3	3.1	1	208	4hrs	445	G	
Laying area of paving (outdoor)								
Concrete driveway	6.5	6	5*	2440	2.5**	4,200	C	*days x 3 people, **days x 4 people
Paving	4.8	5.1	5*	4215	3*	6,615	K	*days x 3 people
Cobblestone path	2.6	5.6	3*	1173	2*	2,400	O	*days x 2 people
Concrete steps	5	6	2.5*	369	1.5*	1,329	P	*days x 2 people
Tree surround	2	5	1.5*	354	1*	850	U	*days x 2 people
Concrete pavers	5	7.5	6*	4480	4*	8,475	P	*days x 3 people
Hanging doors/fitted handles/locks								
Install French Doors	5	2.2	3.5*	2950	2.5*	4,550	B	*days x 2 people
Handing a door	6.5	1.8	1	838	4hrs	1,038	J	
Arboured gate	5	3	2	483	1	805	S	
Tiling walls and/or floors (indoor)								
Stone bath surround	6	5					D	(no detail on cost/time)
Laying mosaic tiles	6	2.8	4	472	2	1300	H	
Building garden walls (outdoor)								
Build picket fence	5	5	3	939	2	1900	A	
Courtyard makeover	5	7.5	8*	2570	6*	6410	E	*days x 2 people
Lattice fence	2.8	4.6	3	1241	2	2050	L	
Decking	7	8	10*	14980	6*	18400	T	*days x 2 people
Plastering/rendering (indoor/outdoor)								
Frontage renovation	7	5	6*	2722	4.5*	5566	V	*days x 2 people
Brick render benches	4	6	5*	2090	3*	4010	W	*days x 2 people
Renovated bathroom/kitchen								

Refer Figure 4.29 for the extended table and context.

7b. Sample detail from guides:

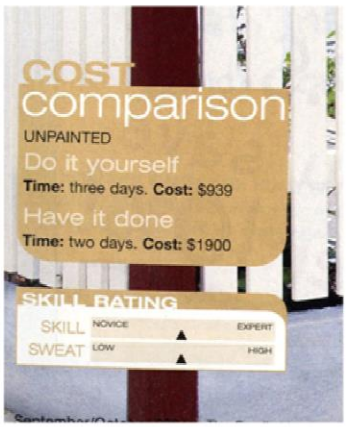
Close up of ‘skill/sweat’ rating (extract from Guide A):



Close up of ‘skill/sweat’ rating (extract from Guide W):

7c. Family Handyman magazine skill guides – sample only (A, B, C, F):

HANDYMAN MAGAZINE PROJECTS - SKILL LEVEL
SCAN REF: A




HOW TO BUILD A
picket
FENCE
Nothing adds a neat finishing touch to the garden and front of the house like a smart picket fence. Here's how!
hint
In Australia, dial 1100 to find the locations of power, gas and phone lines before digging.
FIGURE 1 LEVEL SITE
The Family Handyman September/October 2004 35

HANDYMAN MAGAZINE PROJECTS - SKILL LEVEL
SCAN REF: B

Words: Frank Gardner Photographs: Stuart Scott Diagrams: Stephen Poitt

How to install
FRENCH DOORS

Fed up with those tiny aluminium windows? Let in the sunshine and fresh air with these handsome cedar French doors.

Sound preparation is more than half the battle with this project. We'll be removing the existing window, external brickwork and internal lining.

Window removal

Protect the flooring. We laid a large sheet of bubble wrap on our polished timber floors. If possible, lift out the window sashes. Remove the window architrave then use a hacksaw blade to cut the nails holding the jamb to the wall studs. Usually there are three pairs of nails at each side. Remove the window.

Brickwork

If the new doorframe matches the width of the existing window, plumb down from the window reveals and mark cut lines on the brickwork to the floor.

Our window was 2140mm wide and the new doorframe 1890mm wide. This meant an extra 250mm (one brick course) had to be laid on one side to reduce the opening to 1910mm (Fig. 1). This allowed 10mm for packing wedges.

Knock out the brick sill with a lump hammer. Cut the brickwork using a circular saw with a masonry blade, an angle grinder with a diamond disc or an Arbortech Allsaw (Photo 1). Break up the cut section using a lump hammer and bolster, saving enough bricks to re-lay and ensure a colour match.

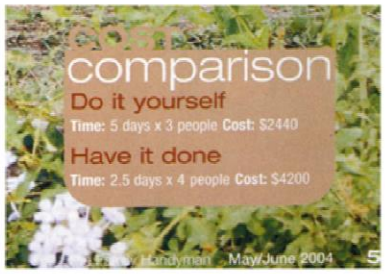
When preparing the brick reveal for re-laying, carefully tooth out the half-bricks to retain the pattern. Re-lay the bricks on one side to narrow the opening to the correct size, ensuring the new reveal is plumb.

Internal lining and frame

Mark plumblines on the plasterboard and skirting. Cut and remove both using a utility knife on the plasterboard and a handsaw on the skirting. Cut the windowsill trimmer with a circular saw. Remove the trimmer and jack studs (Photo 2). Cut the bottom plate on either side using a handsaw. Remember to protect your floor – we used a piece of fibro-cement board beneath the saw teeth. Lever the bottom plate away from the floor joists with a pinch bar

FIGURE 1 OPENING SET-OUT

HANDYMAN MAGAZINE PROJECTS - SKILL LEVEL
SCAN REF: C



HANDYMAN MAGAZINE PROJECTS - SKILL LEVEL
SCAN REF: F

tree bench

Words: John Bowler
Illustrations: Stephen Pollitt

This simple octagonal tree bench could be the perfect spot for entertaining on those long, hot summer days.

The frames

his seat consists of eight frames constructed ndividually and then joined together.

Cut 16 legs 510mm long from 70 x 35mm eated pine – if you have one, use a mitre saw t ensure accuracy of cutting.

AFETY FIRST: remember to wear eye and earing protection when using power tools.

Measure 120mm from the bottom of each g. Using a try square and pencil, mark a line cross both faces of each leg. Cut 32 rails 05mm long from 70 x 35mm treated pine on ur mitre saw.

Drill two 4 mm holes at each end of each rail: ne hole 20mm in from the end and 20mm from e lower edge; the second hole 50mm from the d and 20mm from the upper edge (Fig. 1).

Place a pair of legs parallel to each other on a flat surface. Lay one of the rails on the legs. Align the rail ends with the edges of the legs and the top of the rail with the tops of the legs.

Check for square and fix with two 65mm x 8g galvanised particleboard screws through the predrilled clearance holes. These screws will pull in well as the heads are self-embedding. Use particleboard screws and you won't need to drill pilot holes.

Position the second rail across the legs at the 120mm squared pencil lines. Make the ends flush with the outside edge of the legs and fix as above (Fig. 2).

Turn the frame over and fix two rails on the other side as shown. Repeat this procedure for all eight frames.

The seat

The seat is made up of eight individual sections that fit neatly together. The top segments are at a 135° angle to each other, so the ends of all 90 x 20mm slats must be cut at 67.5° (half the angle). Turn the mitre saw to 22.5° from the right angle and cut one end of each slat, including the front 70 x 20mm slat.

Measure and mark 595mm on the front edge of the 70mm slat. Square a line across the edge. Turn the slat over and cut the other end at the same angle (Fig. 3). Cut all eight front slats in the same way.

The 990mm x 20mm back slat must be cut to a length of 248mm on the inside face (short edge). Mark this length on the edge using a pencil and the square. Turn the timber around

FIGURE 1
EG ASSEMBLY

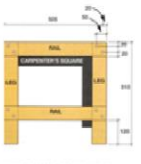


FIGURE 2
COMPLETED LEG

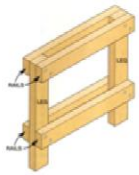


FIGURE 3
FRONT SLAT DETAIL

All measurements in mm

TOOL LIST

- Hammer
- Nail punch
- Power drill, 4mm bit
- Power screwdriver
- Mitre saw
- Paintbrush
- Steel square
- Tape measure

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SURVEY DATA LOCATED TO STUDY

KEY TO BROAD CATEGORIES:

Profile/general
Threads
Key issues*
Links to other study
* May also be linked to five capitals

NOTES:

A Links with other studies, either direct or indirect: 1=AECP (Appendix X + Y), 2=other surveys (Appendix Z), 3=Peng thesis, 4= Toby Israel design psychology exercise (adapted)

B The grouping indicated (colours) is based on overview of survey. Focus on 'design' and 'DIY' attributes are elsewhere

Survey Questions		Relevance to study (threads/key aspects indicated)										
Number	Question	Profile	Context/home	Having/consumption	Doing/DIY	Design/Create	Lifestyle	Skill/comp.	Social/collaboration	Transform/Identity	Sufficiency/interpr.	Links (A)
SECTION A: YOUR HOUSE		Profile	Context	Having	Doing	Design	Lifestyle	Skill	Social	Transf.	Suffic.	Links
A1	Do you live in…? {options provided} - [Building typology]											1
A2	Do you…? {options provided} - [Residential status]											1
A3	Which suburb is your home located in?											1
A4	How many years old is your home, approx.?											1
A5	How did you acquire your house? {options provided}											3
A6a	Please estimate your property size by area (house size)											
A6b	Please estimate your property size by area (block size)											
A7	Please write the number of each type of room you have in your house {options provided}											
A8	Outside, [what accommodation/features] do you have – tick any? {options provided}											
A9a	How many cars in your household? (your car)											1
A9b	How many cars in your household? (partner's car)											1
A9c	How many cars in your household? (children's car/s)											1
A9d	How many cars in your household? (work vehicle/s)											1
A10	Can you put in order of importance the factors that made you select this house? Please write number with '1' as most important, then '2' as next most, and so on, and '0' if not relevant {options provided}											3
A11	Other important factor(s) that influenced your selection of this house, or location if new build											

A12	When you see house plan drawings to scale, would you say you can read and picture the house? {options provided}											
A13	Thinking for a moment what would be the perfect home for you, choose the three (3) terms from the list below which come closest to describing the ideal home – tick 3 boxes {options provided}											1
A14	Looking again at the same list, choose the three (3) that are of the least importance in describing your ideal home – tick 3 boxes {options provided}											1
A15	In relation to your home, choose the three (3) terms from the list below which come closest to describing your home as it is today – tick 3 boxes {options provided}											
A16	How you rate the current condition of your home? {options provided}											
A17	Overall how would you say you choose the main items of furniture in your home – tick up to 3 {options provided}											
A18	Picking one room in the home, say the living room, choose the three (3) terms that best describe how you selected the furniture - tick 3 boxes {options provided}											
A19	Do you have any of the following in your home? {options provided}											1
A20	What would be the main reason why you have chosen your current ornaments/art? {options provided}											
A21	Can you generally define your taste in art? {options provided}											1
A22	Do any specific themes appeal to you most in your choice of artwork at home – tick any {options provided}											
SECTION B: DOMESTIC LEISURE		Profile	Context	Having	Doing	Design	Lifestyle	Skill	Social	Transf.	Suffic.	Links
B1	Of the activities listed below, which do you do often, sometimes, hardly ever, and which do you never do? {options provided}											1
B2	Which of the following do you mostly look for in domestic leisure? {options provided}											1
B3	What access to television do you have in your home? {options provided}											1
B4	Which types of television programme do you make a point of trying to see? - tick any {options provided}											1,2
B5	What are the names of your three favourite television programmes? – in any order											1
B6	Which of the following home/garden TV programmes have you watched on a regular basis? - tick any {options provided}											
B7	What is the main reason you like watching these home/garden programmes? {options provided}											
B8	Which is the main newspaper you read on a daily/weekly basis (free or purchased)?											1,2
B9	Which are your favourite home/garden magazines? – tick any {options provided}											1,2
B10	What is the main reason you get the above magazine(s)? {options provided}											
SECTION C: YOUR SOCIAL + LEISURE ACTIVITIES		Profile	Context	Having	Doing	Design	Lifestyle	Skill	Social	Transf.	Suffic.	Links
C1	When you have guests or visitors in your home, are they mostly [relation to you] {options provided}											1

C2	How do you generally prefer to present the meal at home [style] {options provided}											1
C3a	Where do you generally entertain over food/drinks? – tick 1 (indoors) {options provided)											
C3b	Where do you generally entertain over food/drinks? – tick 1 (outdoors) {options provided}											1
C4	Do you visit or attend [public or retail places] {options provided}											
C5	In the last 10 years, have you attended any of the following adult education classes? {options provided}											
C6	Have you ever attended classes to learn new skills to do with your hands? If so, what kind? (options provided)											
C7	In the last 10 years, have you done any of the following tasks yourself – not by contractor? {options provided}											2,3
C8	Who usually does the decorating? {options provided}											2,3
C9	What are the main reason(s) for who does the decorating? – tick any {options provided}											2,3
C9b	With DIY would you say you are: {options provides}											2,3
C10	In terms of leisure time, which (if any) of the following do you own and use? If you have an investment property that is permanently rented, tick 'other property-own but never use' {options provided}											
SECTION D: TASTES, PREFERENCES + RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES		Profile	Context	Having	Doing	Design	Lifestyle	Skill	Social	Transf.	Suffic.	Links
D1	Which one of the following considerations is most important when you buy yourself clothes? {options provided}											1
D2	Would you mostly buy clothes for yourself from…? [retail stores] {options provided}											1
D3	Looking around your home, what would you say is your preferred colour scheme for home décor? {options provided}											2
D4	With coordinating colours and styles in clothing and/or home décor would you say you are…? {options provided}											2
D5	With food you prepare or eat at home, can you put in order of importance the following…? Please write number with '1' as most important, then '2' as next most, and so on with '0' if not relevant {options provided}											
D6	In terms of your general health and fitness, which of the following describes you best? {options provided}											
D7	In terms of physical activities, what do you do on a weekly basis? – tick any {options provided}											1
D8	What is the main reason you take part in physical activities? {options provided}											1
D9	Which three (3) types of reading material would you prefer to read in your spare time? {options provided}											1
D10	Do you belong to any social groups that meet regularly? {options provided}											1
D11	With regard to your usual holidays, what is your preference? – tick one from each section if relevant {options provided}											1
D11a	Answer (where):											1
D11b	Answer (accommodation):											1
D11c	Answer (organisation):											1

SECTION E: SURVEY DETAILS + OBSERVATIONS		Profile	Context	Having	Doing	Design	Lifestyle	Skill	Social	Transf.	Suffic.	Links
E1	Please write the time taken to complete the survey, approx.											
E2	Please feel free to make any further comments on any notion of the questions contained in the survey, or generally about topics covered inside											
E3a	Researcher to review first interview to see if there were any comments											
E3b	Survey collection date											
E3c	Intervening period											
E4	Survey issue and collection method											
E5	Tool used for completing survey (e.g. pen/pencil)											
E6	Participant comments about task of completing survey (e.g. via email)											
E7a	Researcher general observations of completed survey – omissions											
E7b	Researcher general observations of completed survey – legibility (writing, sketches, notes, freehand doodles):											
E7c	E7c: Researcher general observations of completed survey – misunderstandings											
E7d	Researcher general observations of completed survey – contamination (evidence of someone other than participant contributing to survey):											
E7e	Researcher general observations of completed survey – relations/kinship (cross- reference possible with information relating to other participant/s in study):											
E7f	Researcher general observations of completed survey – observations/comments											
SECTION F: FAMILY, FRIENDS + PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS		Profile	Context	Having	Doing	Design	Lifestyle	Skill	Social	Transf.	Suffic.	Links
F1	In which suburb or Australia – or country overseas – were you, your partner, and your parents born?											1
F1a	Answer (mother):											
F1b	Answer (father):											
F1c	Answer (you):											1
F1d	Answer (your partner):											
F2a	What suburb and country did you spend your childhood; say between age 5 and 15 years old? (suburb/town)											
F2b	What suburb and country did you spend your childhood; say between age 5 and 15 years old? (country)											
F3	What was the occupation of the main breadwinner in your family when you were growing up, say up to the age of 15?											1
F4	Was this person…? {options provided} [levels of responsibility]											1
F5	In the family home, did any of you take part in any of the following activities on a regular basis? {options provided} [recreational activity]											1

F5a	Answer (mother):											
F5b	Answer (father):											
F5c	Answer (you):											1
F5d	Answer (siblings):											
F6	What is the highest level of education you, your partner and your parents have reached to date, or are currently studying towards? {options provided}											1
F6a	Answer (mother):											
F6b	Answer (father):											
F6c	Answer (you):											1
F6d	Answer (your partner):											
F7	Are you…? (options provided) [living status – alone/with others]											1
F8a	How many children live with you? {options provided} (0-10yrs)											1
F8b	Answer (11-15yrs):											1
F8c	Answer (16+yrs):											1
F9	Are you…? {options provided} [gender]											1
F10	What is your age? [group] {options provided}											1
F11	What are the three (3) main qualities do you think your friends would best describe you? {options provided}											
F12	What are the three (3) qualities you value in your friends?											1
F13	Do you currently have a paid job? {options provided}											1
F14	Are you…? {options provided} [employment status]											1
F15	What are/have been your main occupations?											1
F16	Are you…? {options provided} [employment responsibility levels]											1
F17	Which of the following best describes the way you have been working? {options provided} [dexterity, familiarity with tools]											
F18	Do you have pets? What and how many? {options provided}											1
SECTION G: SOCIAL + POLITICAL ATTITUDES		Profile	Context	Having	Doing	Design	Lifestyle	Skill	Social	Transf.	Suffic.	Links
G1	Do you think there is a distinctively Australian culture? {options provided}											1
G2	Which one of the following do you think best expresses this culture? {options provided}											1
G3	Do you think that Australian society is divided into social classes? {options provided}											1
G4	Do you think of yourself as belonging to a particular social class? Which class is that? {options provided}											1,2
G5	Which one of the following do you think most helps people get on in life? {options provided}											1
G6	Generally speaking, in federal politics do you usually think of yourself as…? {options provided}											1
G7	Is lifestyle something you can {options provided}											

G8	In relation to the way you live <u>at home</u>, can you list four (4) of the <u>most</u> significant things that make up or influence your lifestyle? In order of importance from 1 to 4 {space for responses}											
G9	Are there things you would like to change <u>at home</u> in order to improve your lifestyle? {space for responses}											
SECTION H: YOUR ENVIRONMENT - MAPPING		Profile	Context	Having	Doing	Design	Lifestyle	Skill	Social	Transf.	Suffic.	Links
H1	Can you roughly sketch the layout of your <u>current</u> home and garden? Please use the space below, and indicate the entrances and main room uses (eg. kitchen, bathroom 1, bathroom 2, main bedroom, guest bedroom) plus the garden layout, and indicate what is next to your house/garden plot boundary (street, neighbour's house, field). *Please try to do only from memory - and don't worry about your drawing skills*!											4
H2	Can you roughly sketch the layout of your <u>childhood home</u> and garden from memory? If you lived in more than one house up to the age of 15 years old then pick the place where you were **most happy**. Please use the space below, and indicate the entrances and main room uses (eg. kitchen, bathroom, main bedroom, own bedroom, sister's bedroom) plus the garden layout, and indicate what is next to your the house/garden boundary (street, neighbour's house, field). *Again, please try to do only from memory - and don't worry about your drawing skills!*											4

Appendix 9: Subcontracting and DIY compared - roles/practice

Role as subcontractor (s/c) Source: Anthropology PhD thesis (P. J. Moore, 1991)	**Role as DIYer** Source: Thesis case study (working notes)
Independent, self-employed	Independent, self funded
Process of renovating/building, goal driven	Process driven
Groups of individuals as action sets	Often groups of individuals as action sets
Particular purpose/building project	Project based building work
Limited space of time	Proposed limit, but longer than intended
Not constituted as perduring social structures	Remain in existence throughout a substantial period of time; enduring
Temporality – making and breaking social relationships – a significant space	Elements of temporality also – friends over to help out, people advising in stores, etc
Work in house building is known as 'cottage work', or cottage industry. Differentiation between s/c with cottage industry from work with developers/general contracting. S/c is a group of independent workers coming together. Freedom versus necessity of s/c as work basis without any choice in matter.	Reference to small scale, domestic work, likewise fits with DIY. DIY/home renovation more closely aligns with s/c than with development. Relates to freedom, but also constraints of working in a system – not allowed to do electrical or plumbing certain things by self and need planning permission.
Continuity of work to fill available time can be a problem for s/c	Continuity of energy and time the main problem for DIYer.
Constant attention to workflow/continuity of work	Sporadic – disruption for long periods.
Builders concern is for 'flow of trades' (1991, 25-7)	Lack of skill in planning for trades, or tasks in an order unless more experienced in DIY.
Work for free not tolerated well: "No one should work for nothings" (1991,3).	DIY is in fact a decision to do similar building work for 'nothing' but still has an economical focus – to *save* paying cash to s/c or tradie.
Economics change relationships – when money paid for someone to assist the 'employer' wants better 'value' and higher quality work whereas none expected when someone 'helps' out without pay.	With DIY work, friends 'help out' so the person in charge of work is disinclined to be hard on them – in terms of productivity or quality of output. Paperbark observed people's deep need to be valued and to be treated 'fairly'.
World of work characterized by succession of brief encounters with others.	World of work also characterized by succession of brief encounters with others.
Personal relationship, flexible working relationships	Same issues important for DIY where engage tradies – reputation and recommendation, how nice to get on with, availability, etc.
Skill needed to anticipate action of others. Project manage others and self.	Anticipate action of selves – project manage others but also self.
Tradespeople privilege knowledge of current and immediate future over past information.	DIYers are more reflective, valuing past experience, less anxious for current knowledge, although search for information on how to do something can be last minute with narrow focus.
Urgency to stay in touch with the happenings of the moment for continuous work – pressure to stay on top of things.	Generally less pressured time wise and more social/network related, however, lack of skill or experience may bring more stress.
Sharing information person to person is main lifeline of communication, but reserved when others are perceived as competition.	Recommendations, tips and family and friends experience shared helps the progress of work and accumulation of knowledge.
Account of "meaningful social action"; their "cultural practices" are grounded in the practical realities of their work situation (1991, 7-8).	Context of working within a shifting system is important in 'pro' but less significant in 'am' (amateur) building work as that typical to DIY.

Role as subcontractor (s/c) Source: Anthropology PhD thesis (P. J. Moore, 1991)	**Role as DIYer** Source: Thesis case study (working notes)
Social life of 'subbies' difficult to analyze in traditional "lexicon of social analysis" (1991, 7-8).	Likewise, it may be that DIYers are difficult to locate as a group or social cluster as they are dispersed, have varying motives, skills, capabilities, work methods, work partners, etc.
Subbies are a part of 'informal economy'.	DIY is also part of informal economy – reciprocity with friends and family but also paying people cash for some s/c work either in assisting role, or responsibility for more defined work.
Relationship between researcher and researched in anthropological fieldwork – emerges from interaction.	Researcher DIY experience with Jasper represents this level of interaction.
Processual ethnography as 'current history'; anthropologists are "acutely conscious of observing part of the cultural construction of part of society at a particular time." (Sally Falk Moore)	DIY difficult to observe as pace slow, much time thinking through problems without visible action, sporadic progress. Researcher aware of intrusion and possible hazard to distraction.
S/c involves competitive quoting	Straightforward for individual tradesmen to put an economic value on their work within the economic climate; possibly harder for builders where the job is a composite of tasks and trades. With DIY while the concept is to prevent the cost associated with professionals doing the work, the value as done by amateurs is not measured in additive but reductive terms – it did not cost us anything/we saved this amount (quoted by trades)… In fact it does 'cost' something – time, materials, inconvenience, etc.
S/c is mix between social and economic isolation and dependency on relationships for work. Managing of commitments.	Managing of time more complex for DIYer - domestic, work, social and personal commitments, not just work-based as for a s/c.
Relationships are constituted for limited time only: (Nadel) "The orderliness of any social system will be characterized by the measure of self-liquidation it allows or promotes." (1991, 27-30)	This is true even of renovation and DIY. Also there is a relationship between places (shed, deck, Bunnings), materials (paint, sandpaper, nails) and processes (sanding, painting, preparation of surfaces, shopping) that are temporal.
An orderliness that is always emergent and never fixed	Temporary orderliness is part of DIY – clean-ups for visitors, for the week, at end of day so can live in home.
Discontinuity rather than continuity.	Spheres of influence change; some friends more accessible, more helpful, family not always represent continuity. DIY more continuous in location/site but with gaps between projects.
In building work, how work done matters not worker behaviour; performance is more important than motivation	In DIY the opposite can be observed, motivation can be more influential than performance depending on the stage and nature of work.

Role as subcontractor (s/c) Source: Anthropology PhD thesis (P. J. Moore, 1991)	**Role as DIYer** Source: Thesis case study (working notes)
Social relationships based on purpose, not trust or loyalty.	Trust, loyalty are perhaps more important than performance, as level of DIY is often sub-standard to work of a 'tradie'. However, level of satisfaction is often related to speed and performance.
Jaques "time-span of responsibility"; relates to s/c work period, for builder – the entire job. Either way there is a definite (or close realistic estimate) of timeline from outset. (1991, 31-5)	Self-commitment to a project is often based on an uncertain time period, or an unrealistic one.
Remuneration basis discussed. S/c easier for builder than having employees – admin, taxes, super costs. Cheaper for building project.	Reward for effort not measured in accumulation of dollars, but notional sense of 'saving' outlay.
Social isolation as one trade follows another on site, not overlapping.	Social isolation with unsocial hours, but most enjoyable aspect is when social – have help and company during leisure time.
No real confidence about what is a fair price for skill and labour. Not sure how to value.	Concept of fairness as important – if couple may be on time input and equality, although not for most participants – outwardly anyway.
In building you are 'always working to someone else's mistakes', especially in renovation – where jobs more complex tend to be for wages not by price.	In renovation working with fabric that has been done by different people over time, and thus different people's mistakes – cumulative.
"Tendency for older subbies to take on complex jobs, in part because they have the necessary skills, developed over the years, and in part because young subbies are often more interested in piece-work" – thus opportunity to make more money (less security) (1991, 36-40)	Acknowledged difficulty of renovation work over new build, requiring more skill and time. DIY not age related although expectation that previous generations have better developed handyman skills.
Age and physicality of work. Peak earning potential 23 to 38 yrs, height of physical strength and speed and have sufficient trade knowledge.	Exponential change – older and more experience but slower and not as strong – becomes disadvantage on piecework. When something too hard physically, too difficult to compete with, the experience becomes negative – in DIY it can be overwhelming as the knowledge may not be there to compensate for slowing with age.
Gambling – pricing for a job with unknowns – like architect designed one off houses (bespoke)	All renovation tends to be bespoke; it needs specific tailoring to the existing building fabric. Investigate if DIY work presents a 'gamble', situations where owner comes across un-known and un-planned for issues.
'fixing' = labour only (preferred by most – less personal outlay), 'supply and fix' = labour and supply of building materials by subbie (plumbers and electricians). Subbies prefer owners order materials	Even though DIY involves the owner buying materials, often not take into account the labour/fuel investment of driving and collecting. Visible costs (delivery) seem more of an 'out of pocket' issue.
Accounts by subbies were biographical rather than industrial or historical (or chronological).	Same for DIY accounts – participant stories often confused in order of work and details, more about story telling and highlighting issues than accuracy.
Lack of historical accuracy is logical as context changing all time, no social continuity.	Same for DIY as it takes place in parts of a life somewhere between work and leisure, colleagues and family, deadlines and chores.

Role as subcontractor (s/c) Source: Anthropology PhD thesis (P. J. Moore, 1991)	**Role as DIYer** Source: Thesis case study (working notes)
S/c started with everything supplied to site, but ended up with trades spending more on own equipment and vehicles (and trailers) and tools so can get quickly into the work/autonomy. Builder spends less.	DIY is also heavy on buying all tools - as well as materials - for a job. If get a 'subbie'in to do some work then he brings all his tools, but with DIY the owner ends up with a shed full of specific job tools used infrequently as well as general ones.
Trend for a few large builders producing project homes/mass produced houses – same plan design, perhaps flipped. Precise calculate materials, bulk order. Small builder now work on single architect design house where commissioned.	In effect DIYer as a builder is himself this – a small builder on a specific project, but also a spec builder at same time as he is doing own design and costing in hope the outcome will be cost-effective.
Plumbers and electricians have regulated and stringent training. Brickies more learn on site, less than 1% as indentured apprenticeship system.	Mostly learn by trial and error on job or by informal apprenticeship – learning from helping others.
Can be classified as 'extraordinary group' like gypsies who defy government or institutional control – are not groups but "categories of people" (1991, 56-60)	DIYers and renovators for profit would probably fall into this 'category of people' definition.
S/c have territories within which they work and get supplies. They use city for work – not random. Very conscious of who else working in same locality.	Locations of retail and suppliers, and home make a difference to nature of decisions made and distances travelled. Most DIYers know their area – where to source materials but not as well as s/c, DIY tend to hire trailers or get bulk materials delivered. DIYers often have no idea who else doing DIY in area, but may recognize piles of materials on verge as DIY rather than relating to s/c work.
S/c often forced into shorter-term relationships to retain hard working ethic. Example – brickies work hard when fresh but relax work rate after 6 weeks. Turnover aimed at keeping them 'hungry'.	Momentum keeps up with a short project or if decided on a deadline that is not movable, however, often with a renovation the pace eases off. Energy dissipates; motivation dissipates, especially when there is no tangible progress or sense of reward on long projects.
Builders concentrates on building reputation, and want subbies to work hard consistently	Home builder/DIYer not need reputation, but seek tradesmen with reputation - more possessive about home environment when own home, rather than a building project. DIY not necessarily work consistently and nearly always the time blows out.
a. Subbies do expect "stuffing around" as much as productive tasks. 'Stuffing around' – wasted time and effort getting work and materials organized, unpaid. Job is "messy" as in not able to directly do the work in clean runs, eg. "dimensions set out in the drawings do not 'work bricks', so that bricks require cutting for each course". Lot time spent 'setting out'.	Much could be said here about the role of design in material wastage. Many designers are not familiar enough with what happens on the ground, and expect tradesmen to 'fix' the issues. In this sense, there is a lot that is not participatory – the work is staged – design stage then build stage. DIY compresses these and is often the reverse – the materials or existing fabric or work situation present the design opportunities. DIY is mostly about stuffing around – trial and error

Role as subcontractor (s/c) Source: Anthropology PhD thesis (P. J. Moore, 1991)	**Role as DIYer** Source: Thesis case study (working notes)
Definitions – tradesman "possession of a recognized craft or trade", may do union work, award conditions, etc. Can also be self-employed or 'subbie', which is more about mode of payment, relationship with builder.	How does a tradesman like Paperbark, or designer like Fleetwood, define himself on his own home jobs? A designer does not necessarily see self as tradesman. Not think of self as professional working at home.
"Time is money" – time as limited resource, valuable commodity (ref. Lakoff & Johnson)	a. Defining value of time – meaning in everyday lives to be investigated.